

TYPES
OF
THE ENGLISH ESSAY

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PREFACE

The Essay is perhaps the most conspicuous and the most comprehensive form of modern prose—every kind of prose writing, from the report of a Police Inspector to the philosophical reflections of a Marcus Aurelius being at bottom but an essay. I have tried to illustrate this protean form of the Essay in the selections that follow. The subject-matter is as varied as the style, and the style too varies from age to age, assuming many forms between Bacon and Stevenson. The standard aimed at in both style and matter is that of the Intermediate, a class of which I happen to possess the longest experience,—a class, too, for which it is admittedly hard to find suitable text-books in English prose.

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A. C. M.

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INTRODUCTION.

I.

THE ESSAY : WHAT IT IS

Dr. Johnson defined the Essay as "a loose sally of the mind—an irregular, undigested piece of composition." The Essay was thus an undignified or despised literary form about the end of the 18th century. In the next century the Essay rose considerably in literary rank, but underwent little transformation in form or nature. It is still a mental outburst, more or less loose, according to the texture of the writer. Literally, the word 'essay' means 'an attempt,' so that an Essay may be more properly defined as a piece of composition in which something is *attempted* to be described or proved or illustrated.

The nature of the Essay, as it figures in English literature, may be best discovered by a study of the great essayists, who by indulging in "loose sallies of the mind" have laid down a literary form of great utility, beauty and variety. The first characteristic of the Essay is that it is only an *attempt* at treating a subject. It does not aim at treating a subject with fulness of detail or from every conceivable point of view, but deliberately presents only those aspects of it which strike the writer as peculiarly suited either to his needs or his moods. The writer does not aim at any exhaustive

treatment of his subject; he does not wish to traverse the whole ground, or to say everything that might be said upon a question. He merely presents his own views upon a question, and confines his attention only to such of them as he thinks worth presenting at the time. These views have generally something original, or at least novel, in them, or at any rate the mode of treatment is usually such as to bring those views before the public in some striking manner. And yet it is a mere "attempt" at handling a subject, and hence makes no claim to scientific accuracy or even systematic exposition.

The second characteristic of the English Essay, and one that in a way follows from the first, is a certain ease or lightness in the mode of treatment and in the style. An Essay does not profess to deal exhaustively with a subject, and hence lacks the seriousness of a regular treatise. It has nothing academic about it, but has an air of grace and smoothness which plays on all sides of it and gives to it its peculiar quality of spontaneity and freedom. It purports to be written by a man for his friends, not by a lecturer for his audience nor by a preacher for his congregation, and the style is therefore neither academic, nor didactic nor hortative, but simple and straightforward, such as would be consistent with a clear and popular exposition of a subject. And yet while avoiding the severe formality of a scientific treatise, it does not descend to the homely, conversational style of a private letter.

The third characteristic of the Essay is the

personal tone that runs through it. Being neither a scientific treatise nor an academic lecture, the Essay does not pretend to do anything more than represent the writer's own views upon a given question. And hence there is nothing polemical or controversial about the Essay; that is to say, it does not invite discussion from those who might happen to hold views different from the writer's. Herein perhaps the Essay differs from a newspaper article, which, while offering the writer's personal opinions upon a subject of general interest, openly or tacitly challenges criticism.

To sum up, the three distinctive characteristics of an Essay are—(1) that it is a mere attempt at treating a subject: (2) that it has a certain grace and smoothness about its tone and style that marks it off from a scientific treatise and an academic lecture; and (3) that it adopts a purely personal standpoint and at the same time avoids all intention of entering into controversy.

II.

TYPES OF THE ENGLISH ESSAY.

Being an expression of personal opinion upon some selected aspect or aspects of a given question, the Essay may have as many forms or varieties as there are ways of expressing opinion or subjects upon which opinions may be expressed. When personal or individual tastes determine the form of a piece of composition, it is obvious that the form will be multifarious. Nevertheless, the literary essay may be grouped into certain well-defined

types according to the class of subject with which it deals. It is usually divided into three chief types—(1) the Descriptive, (2) the Narrative, and (3) the Reflective Essay.

The Descriptive Essay aims at presenting a picture of a person, place or thing, and confines itself only to those aspects of it which specially strike the writer, or which the writer desires to bring prominently to the notice of the reader. As such, the Descriptive Essay is a mere sketch representing the writer's personal impressions, whether they be of a passing character, or deep and settled. Within this species there are many forms varying with the writer's mental framework. One writer may describe an object in such away as to invest it with a glow of enchantment, however insignificant or commonplace the object may be ; while another may describe even the most fascinating scene in such a way as to make it hopelessly dull or even repulsive. A gifted genius may make his essay like a piece of bright painting decked in the liveliest hues of art, whereas an inferior writer may make his attempt at description a mere muddle, as vague in thought as in language.

The Narrative Essay aims at telling a little story or describing an incident of real or imaginary life, confining itself again to those aspects which the writer may specially select for presentation. The Narrative Essay may thus be designated as a little novel in which the writer himself may have a part. This type of Essay affords an excellent medium for describing a writer's personal experi-

ences. Here too the charm mainly depends upon the individual merits of the writer. The most romantic incident of life may appear as sickening from the pen of an indifferent writer, while the commonest commonplace may, in the hand of a true artist, be endowed with an abiding charm.

The Reflective Essay claims to represent the writer's thoughts and feelings upon a given subject, usually of a moral or social nature. It consists of a series of thoughts suggested to the writer's mind by the sight or contemplation of some actual object or the imaginary realization of a possible situation. The Reflective Essay may thus be regarded as a bit of philosophy stripped of its sober robes and presented in a plainer garb. This is the kind of essay that is likely to suffer the worst treatment at the hands of a poor writer, to whom it gives infinite scope to indulge in loose disjointed thoughts or preach ill-digested or unacceptable doctrines in a strain "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

These, then, are the three chief types of the literary Essay. But the classification is by no means logical: the different species overlap one another. For instance, the descriptive essay must include bits of narrative or the writer's personal reflections here and there, otherwise it would become a mere guide-book. Similarly, the narrative essay must have bits of description here and there and indulge in reflections occasionally to escape becoming a mere catalogue of events: and the reflective essay must likewise pause sometimes in its train of

thoughts and divert itself with sketches of character and events to relieve the continuous strain upon the mind.

III.

HISTORY OF THE ESSAY.

The first author who wrote essays in the modern style was the great French writer, Montaigne (1533-1592). His example was followed in England by Bacon, whose essays are "models of close-packed epigrammatic wisdom" that have never since been equalled, though they have been frequently imitated by writers like Sir Arthur Helps. Bacon is usually regarded as the pioneer of the English Essay; but he himself chose the form not from any intention to give it the stamp of his authority, but only because it best suited his purpose of jotting down in the form of mere hasty notes, his own thoughts on life and life's affairs. The name 'essay' was chosen merely as a modest title. Bacon's example was quickly followed, in the next century, by a number of writers, such as Overbury, Bishop Earle, Bowley and Sir William Temple. But it was Steele and Addison, who, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, raised the essay to its present rank, and gave it that popularity which it enjoys to this day. The secret of this popularity was no doubt the gracefulness of their style. Before their time, English prose was turgid and artificially ornate, abounding in long-winded sentences and studied expressions. Addison and Steele, on the contrary, wrote in a style "that caught the ease and spontaneous flow of conversa-

tion, while it never degenerated into slipshod speech or vulgarity."

Addison was followed by Dr. Johnson, whose language was full of classicisms and whose style generally was so inflated that the term 'Johnsonese' has come to signify a bombastic style. But Johnson could at times write in a style as simple and graceful as Addison's own, and he actually copied Addison's *Spectator* by bringing out his *Rambler* and his *Adventurer*.

Goldsmith and Cowper carry on the continuity of the essay during the rest of the eighteenth century. Both these writers display the same acute but kindly observation of the foibles and follies of men and women that we find in Steele and Addison, the same play of delightful humour, the same conversational ease of style, the same pithy wisdom. Both these writers also depict the manners and customs of their times faithfully in their writings. Their essays are valuable not only for their style but also for their contemporary portraits.

Hazlitt, Lamb, and Leigh Hunt inaugurate the early nineteenth century essay, which is distinguished for all those qualities that marked the earlier type, and possess, in addition, a few others peculiar to itself. Life is, to these writers, no longer a matter for sport, but a serious affair. The essay is no longer written by or for those who watch with amusement the conversation and dress and behaviour of the men and women around them in town or country: it is intended for the consideration of those who seriously reflect upon the problem of life, for

those whose imaginations have been stimulated by poetry and fiction, for those who have studied the history of their own country and of the world,—in a word, the essay is the finished product of a thoroughly cultured mind, written for the delight and instruction of a cultured circle of readers.

The nineteenth century was an age of science, and no form of literature produced in this age could therefore fail to represent the scientific spirit of the age. The nineteenth century essay is accordingly weighted with the burden of the practical inventions and eager speculations which have been the chief achievements of this age. The essays of De Quincey, longer and more elaborate than those of the eighteenth century, already resemble the magazine article. The essays of Carlyle and Macaulay, longer and more elaborate still, are inseparably associated with the great quarterly reviews. But the eighteenth century style has not altogether passed out of fashion. Now and then a writer, like R. L. Stevenson, while retaining the impress of his own personality, adopts a vein distinctly similar to that of the great essayists of the former age.

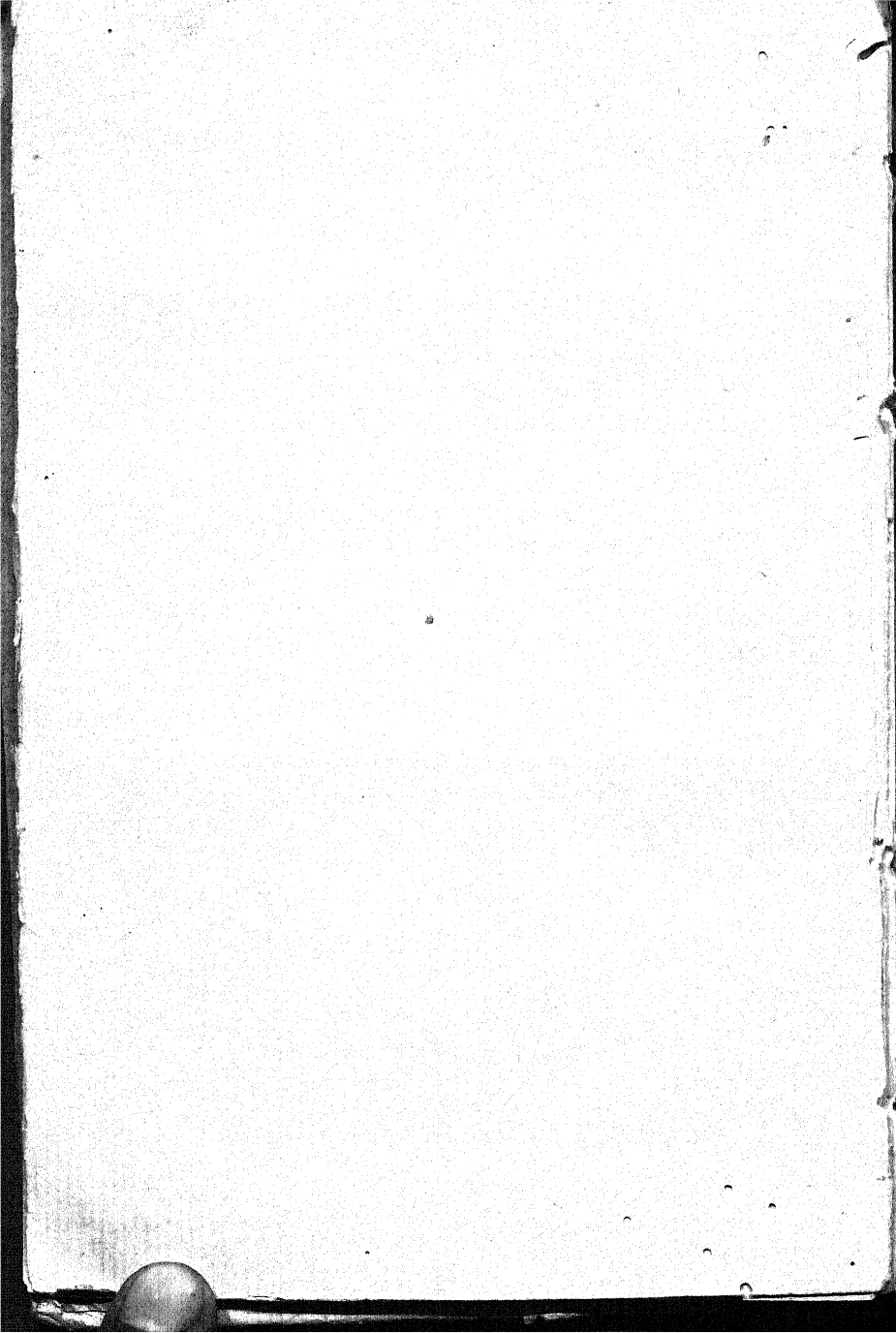
IV.

STUDY OF THE ESSAY.

If we carefully study the nature of the Essay, as we find illustrated in these selections, we shall have no difficulty in understanding how far we can use these as models for our own compositions. The nature of the essay has already been explained in an earlier part of this Introduction. We shall easily

perceive that each essay contains a beginning, a middle, and an end—that is, the introduction, the body of the essay, and the conclusion. It is often easy to find enough suitable matter to pack into the body of the essay, but it is sometimes very difficult to make a suitable beginning or end. It is really the beginning and the end of the essay that are its most important parts ; the beginning makes it readable or unreadable—the end produces an impression or leaves a blank, according as either is good or bad. The body of the essay depends upon what thoughts and ideas a writer can summon to his service, and these must necessarily depend upon his course of reading or observation.

In studying an essay, we have first to appreciate the author's point of view, and grasp the opinions he inculcates and the arguments he brings forward in support of those opinions. We have to follow the train of his ideas in their due sequence, how he expresses them or amplifies them or illustrates them for the purpose in hand. We have then to understand his conclusion, and to see how he leads up to it. In doing so we have to examine his style and his vocabulary.



I.

OF STUDIES.

Francis Bacon, 1561—1626.

[Francis Bacon was an eminent English philosopher, statesman and essayist. He was also a great orator. His contemporary, the poet Ben Jonson, says of his eloquence "that the fear of every man who heard him was lest he should make an end." On the accession of James I he was knighted, and in 1604 was appointed a King's Counsel. Next year he published his great work, *the Advancement of Learning*, for which he was made Solicitor-General. In 1611 he was appointed a judge; in 1613, Attorney-General; in 1616 a Privy Councillor; in 1617, Lord-Keeper of the Great Seal; and next year, Lord Chancellor, with a peerage in rank. He was accused of bribery and imprisoned for a time.

His most famous literary work is the "Essays" and his most famous essay is the one on Studies, almost every sentence of which has passed into a proverb. The maxims of Bacon have become the commonplaces of life.]

Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgment and disposition of business. For expert men can execute and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one; but the general counsels, and the plots, and the marshalling of affairs, come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies is sloth; to use them too much for ornament is affectation; to make judgment wholly by their rules is the humour of a scholar. They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience: for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study: and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men condemn studies; simple men admire them; and wise men

use them : for they teach not their own use ; but that is a wisdom without them, and above them, won by observation. Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, not to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested : that is, some books are to be read only in parts ; others to be read, but not curiously ; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others : but that would be only in the less important arguments and the meaner sort of books : else distilled books are like common distilled waters, flashy things. Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man. And therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory ; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit ; and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know that he doth not. Histories make men wise, poets witty, the mathematics subtle, natural philosophy deep, moral grave, logic and rhetoric able to contend. *Abeunt studia in mores*. Nay, there is no stone or impediment in the wit, but may be wrought out by fit studies : like as diseases of the body may have appropriate exercises. Bowling is good for the stone and reins ; shooting for the lungs and breast ; gentle walking for the stomach ; riding for the head ; and the like. | So if a man's wit be wandering, let him study the mathematics : for in demonstrations, if his wit be called away never so little, he must begin again. If his wit be not apt to distinguish or find differences, let him study the school men ; for they are *Cymini sectores*. If he be not apt to beat over matters and to call up one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyers' cases. So every defect of the mind may have a special receipt.

II.

THE ART OF CONVERSATION.

Jonathan Swift, 1667—1745.

[Swift was an Irish satirist and political writer. In 1713 he became Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin. He was also for some time Secretary to Sir William Temple. His best known works are a satirical romance, called "Gulliver's Travels," and an allegory called "A Tale of a Tub." He possessed talents of the highest order and as a witty satirist of terrible power he stands alone in English literature. As a prose writer his style is remarkably clear and forcible.]

I have observed few obvious subjects to have been so seldom, or, at least, so slightly handled as this; and, indeed, I know few so difficult to be treated as it ought, nor yet upon which there seems so much to be said.

Most things, pursued by men for the happiness of public or private life, our wit or folly have so refined, that they seldom subsist but in idea: a true friend, a good marriage, a perfect form of government, with some others, require so many ingredients, so good in their several kinds, and so much niceness in mixing them, that for some thousands of years men have despaired of reducing their schemes to perfection. But, in conversation, it is, or might be otherwise; for here we are only to avoid a multitude of errors, which, although a matter of some difficulty, may be in every man's power, for want of which it remains as mere an idea as the other. Therefore it seems to me, that the truest way to understand conversation, is to know the faults and errors to which it is subject, and from thence every man to form maxims to himself whereby it may be regulated, because it requires few talents to which most men are not born, or at least may not acquire without

any great genius or study.^b For nature has left every man a capacity of being agreeable, though not of shining in company; and there are a hundred men sufficiently qualified for both, who, by a very few faults, that they might correct in half an hour, are not so much as tolerable.

I was prompted to write my thoughts upon this subject by mere indignation, to reflect that so useful and innocent a pleasure, so fitted for every period and condition of life, and so much in all men's power, should be so much neglected and abused.

And in this discourse it will be necessary to note those errors that are obvious, as well as others which are seldomer observed, since there are few so obvious, or acknowledged, into which most men, some time or other, are not apt to run.

For instance: nothing is more generally exploded than the folly of talking too much; yet I rarely remember to have seen five people together, where some one among them hath not been predominant in that kind, to the great constraint and disgust of all the rest. But among such as deal in multitudes of words, none are comparable to the sober deliberate talker, who proceeds with much thought and caution, makes his preface, branches out into several digressions, finds a hint that puts him in mind of another story which he promises to tell you when this is done; comes back regularly to his subject, cannot readily call to mind some person's name, holding his head, complains of his memory; the whole company all this while in suspense; at length says, it is no matter, and so goes on. And, to crown the business, it perhaps proves at last a story the company has heard fifty times before; or, at best, some insipid adventure of the relater.

Another general fault in conversation is that of those who affect to talk of themselves. Some, without any ceremony, will run over the history of their lives; will relate

the annals of their diseases, with the several symptoms and circumstances of them ; will enumerate the hardships and injustice they have suffered in court, in parliament, in love, or in law. Others are more dexterous, and with great art will lie on the watch to hook in their own praise : They will call a witness to remember, they always foretold what would happen in such a case, but none would believe them ; they advised such a man from the beginning, and told him the consequences, just as they happened ; but he would have his own way. Others make a vanity of telling their faults ; they are the strangest men in the world ; they cannot dissemble ; they own it is a folly ; they have lost abundance of advantages by it ; but, if you would give them the world, they cannot help it ; there is something in their nature that abhors insincerity and constraint ; with many other insufferable topics of the same altitude.

Of such mighty importance every man is to himself, and ready to think he is so to others ; without once making this easy and obvious reflection, that his affairs can have no more weight with other men, than theirs have with him ; and how little that is, he is sensible enough.

Where company has met, I often have observed two persons discover, by some accident, that they were bred together at the same school or university, after which the rest are condemned to silence, and to listen while these two are refreshing each other's memory with the arch tricks and passages of themselves and their comrades.

I know a great officer of the army, who will sit for some time with a supercilious and impatient silence, full of anger and contempt for those who are talking ; at length of a sudden demand audience, decide the matter in a short dogmatical way ; then withdraw within himself again, and vouchsafe to talk no more, until his spirits circulate again to the same point.

There are some faults in conversation, which none are so subject to as the men of wit, not ever so much as when they are with each other. If they have opened their mouths, without endeavouring to say a witty thing, they think it is so many words lost. It is a torment to the hearers, as much as to themselves, to see them upon the rack for invention, and in perpetual constraint, with so little success. They must do something extraordinary, in order to acquit themselves, and answer their character, else the standers-by may be disappointed and be apt to think them only like the rest of mortals. I have known two men of wit industriously brought together, in order to entertain the company, where they have made a very ridiculous figure, and provided all the mirth at their own expense.

I know a man of wit who is never easy but where he can be allowed to dictate and preside: he neither expects to be informed or entertained, but to display his own talents. His business is to be good company, and not good conversation; and, therefore, he chooses to frequent those who are content to listen, and profess themselves his admirers. And, indeed, the worst conversation I ever remember to have heard in my life was that at Will's coffeehouse, where the wits (as they were called) used formerly to assemble; that is to say, five or six men, who had writ plays, or at least prologues, or had share in a miscellany, came thither, and entertained one another with their trifling compositions, in so important an air, as if they had been the noblest efforts of human nature, or that the fate of kingdoms depended on them; and they were usually attended with an humble audience of young students from the inns of court, or the universities, who, at due distance, listened to these oracles, and returned home with great contempt for their law and philosophy, their heads filled with trash, under the name of politeness, criticism and *belles lettres*.

By these means the poets, for many years past, were all overrun with pedantry. For, as I take it, the word is not

properly used ; because pedantry is the too frequent or unreasonable obtruding our own knowledge in common discourse, and placing too great a value upon it ; by which definition, men of the court or the army may be as guilty of pedantry as a philosopher or a divine ; and, it is the same vice in women, when they are over-copious upon the subject of their petticoats, or their fans, or their china. For which reason, although it be a piece of prudence, as well as good manners, to put men upon talking on subjects they are best versed in, yet that is a liberty a wise man could hardly take ; because, besides the imputation of pedantry, it is what he would never improve by.

III.

THE ROYAL EXCHANGE.

Joseph Addison, 1672—1719.

[Joseph Addison was a famous English essayist, who in these days would probably have been called a journalist or reviewer. In 1711 he founded a weekly paper called the *Spectator*, which gave way to another named the *Guardian*, which was again followed by the *Spectator*, revived. In 1717 Addison became Secretary of State. As a writer he stands in the first rank. His humour, which is peculiar to himself, is so happily diffused that it gives the grace of novelty to trivial and commonplace occurrences. Dr. Johnson, the best critic of his age, says: "Whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison."

There is no place in the town which I so much love to frequent as the Royal Exchange. It gives me a secret satisfaction, and in some measure gratifies my vanity, as I am an Englishman, to see so rich an assembly of countrymen and foreigners, consulting together upon the private business of mankind, and making this metropolis a kind of emporium for the whole earth. I must confess I look upon high-change to be a great council, in which all considerable nations have their representatives. Factors in the trading world are what ambassadors are in the political world; they negotiate affairs, conclude treaties, and maintain a good correspondence between those wealthy societies of men that are divided from one another by seas and oceans, or live on the different extremities of a continent. I have often been pleased to hear disputes adjusted between an inhabitant of Japan, and an alderman of London, or to see a subject of the Great Mogul entering into a league with one of the Czar of Muscovy. I am infinitely delighted in mixing

with these several ministers of commerce, as they are distinguished by their different walks and different languages. Sometimes I am jostled among a body of Armenians; sometimes I am lost in a crowd of Jews; and sometimes make one in a group of Dutchmen. I am a Dane, Swede, or Frenchman at different times; or rather fancy myself like the old philosopher, who upon being asked what countryman he was, replied that he was a citizen of the world.

Nature seems to have taken a particular care to disseminate her blessings among the different regions of the world, with an eye to this mutual intercourse and traffic among mankind, that the natives of the several parts of the globe might have a kind of dependence upon one another, and be united together by their common interest. Almost every degree produces something peculiar to it. The food often grows in one country, and the sauce in another. The fruits of Portugal are corrected by the products of Barbadoes, and the infusion of a China plant is sweetened with the pith of an Indian cane. The Phillippic island give a flavour to our European bowls. The single dress of a woman of quality is often the product of an hundred climates. The muff and the fan come together from the different ends of the earth. The scarf is sent from the torrid zone, and the tippet from beneath the pole. The brocade petticoat rises out of the mines of Peru, and the diamond necklace out of the bowels of Indostan.

If we consider our own country in its natural prospect, without any of the benefits and advantages of commerce, what a barren and uncomfortable spot of earth falls to our share! Natural historians tell us, that no fruit grows originally among us, besides hips and haws, acorns and pig-nuts, with other delicacies of the like nature; that our climate of itself, and without the assistance of art, can make no further advances towards a plum than to a sloe, and carries an apple to no greater perfection than a crab;

that our melons, our peaches, our figs, our apricots and cherries, are strangers among us, imported in different ages, and naturalised in our English gardens; and that they would all degenerate and fall away into the trash of our own country, if they were wholly neglected by the planter, and left to the mercy of our sun and soil. Nor has traffic more enriched our vegetable world, than it has improved the whole face of nature among us. Our ships are laden with the harvest of every climate. Our tables are stored with spices and oils and wines. Our rooms are filled with pyramids of China, and adorned with the workmanship of Japan. Our morning's draught comes to us from the remotest corners of the earth. We repair our bodies by the drugs of America, and repose ourselves under Indian canopies. My friend Sir Andrew calls the vineyards of France our gardens: the spice-islands, our hot-beds; the Persians our silk-weavers, and the Chinese our potters. Nature indeed furnishes us with the bare necessities of life, but traffic gives us a great variety of what is useful, and at the same time supplies us with everything that is convenient and ornamental. Nor is it the least part of this our happiness, that whilst we enjoy the remotest products of the north and south, we are free from those extremities of weather which give them birth; that our eyes are refreshed with the green fields of Britain, at the same time that our palates are feasted with fruits that rise between the tropics.

For these reasons there are not more useful members in a commonwealth than merchants. They knit mankind together in a mutual intercourse of good offices, distribute the gifts of nature, find work for the poor, add wealth to the rich, and magnificence to the great. Our English merchant converts the tin of his own country into gold, and exchanges its wool for rubies. The Mahometans are clothed in our British manufacture, and the inhabitants of the frozen zone warmed with the fleeces of our sheep.

When I have been upon the Change, I have often fancied one of our old kings standing in person, where he is represented in effigy, and looking down upon the wealthy concourse of people with which that place is every day filled. In this case, how would he be surprised to hear all the languages of Europe spoken in this little spot of his former dominions, and to see so many private men, who in his time would have been the vassals of some powerful baron, negotiating like princes for greater sums of money than were formerly to be met with in the royal treasury ! Trade, without enlarging the British territories, has given us a kind of additional empire. It has multiplied the number of the rich, made our landed estates infinitely more valuable than they were formerly, and added to them an accession of other estates as valuable as the lands themselves.

IV.

JOURNEY IN A STAGE-COACH.

Samuel Johnson, 1709—1784.

[Samuel Johnson, commonly known as Dr. Johnson, was a learned English critic, lexicographer and miscellaneous writer. During his early career he used to write cheap articles for the London magazines, and in 1750 he started a journal of his own, called the *Rambler*, which existed only for two years, and was followed by others, named the *Idler*, and the *Adventurer*. The essay that follows is taken from one of the issues of the *Adventurer*. In 1759 he published his famous romance of "Rasselas." Four years earlier his still more famous Dictionary had appeared. His last literary labour was the *Lives of the English Poets*.

Dr. Johnson was the most conspicuous literary figure of his time. He was acknowledged as the greatest critic of his age, but his pompous, antithetical, and inflexible style was soon superseded in public estimation by the vigour and elegance of more natural writers.]

In a stage-coach the passengers are for the most part wholly unknown to one another, and without expectation of ever meeting again when their journey is at an end; one should, therefore, imagine, that it was of little importance to any of them, what conjectures the rest should form concerning him. Yet so it is, that as all think themselves secure from detection, all assume that character of which they are most desirous, and on no occasion is the general ambition of superiority more apparently indulged.

On the day of our departure in the twilight of the morning, I ascended the vehicle with three men and two women, my fellow-travellers. It was easy to observe the affected elevation of mein with which every one entered, and the supercilious civility with which they paid their compliments to each other. When the first ceremony was

dispatched, we sat silent for a long time, all employed in collecting importance into our faces, and endeavouring to strike reverence and submission into our companions.

It is always observable, that silence propagates itself, and that the longer talk has been suspended, the more difficult it is to find anything to say. We began now to wish for conversation; but no one seemed inclined to descend from his dignity, or first to propose a topic of discourse. At last a corpulent gentleman, who had equipped himself ^{hat} for this expedition with a scarlet surtout and a large hat ^{overcoat} with a broad lace, drew out his watch, looked on it in silence, and then held it dangling at his finger. This was, I suppose, understood by all the company as an invitation to ask the time of the day, but nobody appeared to heed his overture; and his desire to be talking so far overcame his resentment, that he let us know of his own accord that it was past five, and that in two hours we should be at breakfast.

<sup>Hard
hearted</sup> His condescension was thrown away; we continued all obdurate; the ladies held up their heads; I amused myself with watching their behaviour; and of the other two, one seemed to employ himself in counting the trees as we drove by them, the other drew his hat over his eyes and counterfeited a slumber. The man of benevolence, to shew that he was not depressed by our neglect, hummed a tune and beat time upon his snuff-box.

¹⁷³ Thus universally displeased with one another, and not much delighted with ourselves, we came at last to the little inn appointed for our repast; and all began at once to recompense ourselves for the restraint of silence, by innumerable questions and orders to the people that attended us. At last, what every one had called for was got, or declared impossible to be got at that time, and we were persuaded to sit around the same table: when the gentleman in the red surtout looked again upon his watch, told us that we had half an hour to spare, but he was sorry to see so little

Witty
merriment among us ; that all fellow-travellers were for the time upon the level, and that it was always his way to make himself one of the company. " I remember," says he, " it was on just such a morning as this, that I and my lord Mumble and the duke of Tenterden were out upon a ramble : we called at a little house as it might be this ; and my landlady, I warrant you, not suspecting to whom she was talking, was so jocular and facetious, and made so many merry answers to our questions, that we were all ready to burst with laughter. At last the good woman happening to overhear me whisper the duke and call him by his title, was so surprised and confounded, that we could scarcely get a word from her ; and the duke never met me from that day to this, but he talks of the little house, and quarrels with me for terrifying the landlady."

He had scarcely time to congratulate himself on the veneration which this narrative must have procured him from the company, when one of the ladies having reached out for a plate on a distant part of the table, began to remark " the inconvenience of travelling, and the difficulty which they who never sat at home without a great number of attendants found in performing for themselves such offices as the road required ; but that people of quality often travelled in disguise, and might be generally known from the vulgar by their condescension to poor inn-keepers, and the allowance which they made for any defect in their entertainment ; that for her part, while people were civil, and meant well, it was never her custom to find fault, for one was not to expect upon a journey all that one enjoyed at one's own house."

A general emulation seemed now to be excited. One of the men, who had hitherto said nothing, called for the last newspaper ; and having perused it a while with deep pensiveness, " It is impossible," says he, " for any man to guess how to act with regard to the stocks ; last week it

was the general opinion that they would fall ; and I sold out twenty thousand pounds in order to a purchase : they have now risen unexpectedly ; and I make no doubt but at my return to London, I shall risk thirty thousand pounds amongst them again."

A young man, who had hitherto distinguished himself only by the vivacity of his looks, and a frequent diversion^{lightness} of his eyes from one object to another, upon this closed his snuff-box, and told us, that " he had a hundred times talked with the chancellor and the judges on the subject of the stocks; that for his part he did not pretend to be well acquainted with the principles on which they were established, but had always heard them reckoned pernicious to trade, uncertain in their produce, and unsolid in their foundation ; and that he had been advised by three judges, his most intimate friends, never to venture his money in the funds, but to put it out upon land security, till he could light upon an estate in his own country."

It might be expected, that upon these glimpses of latent dignity, we should all have begun to look round us with veneration ; and have behaved like the princes of romance, when the enchantment that disguises them is dissolved, and they discover the dignity of each other: yet it happened, that none of these hints made much impression on the company ; everyone was apparently suspected of endeavouring to impose false appearances upon the rest ; all continued their haughtiness, in hopes to enforce their claims ; and all grew every hour more sullen, because they found their representations of themselves without effect.

Thus we travelled on four days with malevolence perpetually increasing, and without any endeavour but to outvie each other in superciliousness and neglect ; and when any two of us could separate ourselves for a moment we vented our indignation at the sauciness of the rest. ~~careless~~
-ness

Insolence

At length the journey was at an end ; and time and chance, that strip off all disguises, have discovered, that the intimate of lords and dukes is a nobleman's butler, who has furnished a shop with the money he has saved ; the man who deals so largely in the funds, is a clerk of a broker in Change alley ; the lady who so carefully concealed her quality, keeps a cook-shop behind the Exchange ; and the young man, who is so happy in the friendship of the judges, engrosses and transcribes for bread in a garret of the Temple. Of one of the women only I could make no disadvantageous detection, because she had assumed no character, but accommodated herself to the scene before her, without any struggle for distinction or superiority.

writing
papers.
Legal business

I could not forbear to reflect on the folly of practising a fraud, which, as the event shewed, had been already practised too often to succeed, and by the success of which no advantage could have been obtained ; of assuming a character, which was to end with the day ; and of claiming upon false pretences honours which must perish with the breath that paid them.

But let not those who laugh at me and my companions, think this folly confined to a stage-coach. Every man in the journey of life takes the same advantage of the ignorance of his fellow-travellers, disguises himself in counterfeited merit and hears those praises with complacency which his conscience reproaches him for accepting. Every man deceives himself, while he thinks he is deceiving others ; and forgets that the time is at hand when every illusion shall cease, when fictitious excellence shall be torn away, and all must be shown to all in their real estate.

false

V.

THE FOLLY OF ATTEMPTING TO LEARN WISDOM
BY BEING RECLUSE.

Oliver Goldsmith, 1728—1774.

[Oliver Goldsmith was an Irish poet and miscellaneous writer. He had a chequered career in life, serving as a chemist's assistant, a medical practitioner, a proof-reader, a school usher from time to time. He won reputation as a poet by his *Traveller* and *Deserted Village* which appeared in 1764 and 1770 respectively. His *Vicar of Wakefield* is a social novel which is very popular with young readers. He also attempted some comedies, but without success. Goldsmith has been called "the most charming and versatile, and certainly one of the greatest writers of the 18th century. His works bear a peculiar stamp of gentle grace and elegance, free from all stain of coarseness or vulgarity. The most striking quality of his writings is the union of grotesque humour with a sort of pensive tenderness.

The following essay is one of a series of imaginary letters supposed to have been written by a Chinaman, and published under the title of *Citizen of the World*].

BOOKS, my son, while they teach us to respect the interests of others, often make us unmindful of our own : while they instruct the youthful reader to grasp at social happiness, he grows miserable in detail, and, attentive to universal harmony, often forgets that he himself has a part to sustain in the concert. I dislike therefore the philosopher who describes the inconveniences of life in such pleasing colours that the pupil grows enamoured of distress, longs to try the charms of poverty, meets it without dread, nor fears its inconveniences till he severely feels them.

A youth who has thus spent his life among books, new to the world, and unacquainted with man, but by philosophical information, may be considered as a being, whose mind

is filled with the vulgar errors of the wise ; utterly unqualified for a journey through life, yet confident of his own skill in the direction, he sets out with confidence, blunders on with vanity, and finds himself at last undone.

He first has learned from books, and then lays it down as a maxim, that all mankind are virtuous or vicious in excess ; and he has been long taught to detest vice and love virtue : warm, therefore, in attachments, and steadfast in enmity, he treats every creature as a friend or foe ; expects from those he loves unerring integrity, and consigns his enemies to the reproach of wanting every virtue. On this principle he proceeds ; and here begin his disappointments. Upon a closer inspection of human nature, he perceives that he should have moderated his friendship, and softened his severity : for he often finds the excellences of one part of mankind clouded with vice, and the faults of the other brightened with virtue ; he finds no character so sanctified that has not its failings, none so infamous but has somewhat to attract our esteem ; he beholds impiety in lawn, and fidelity in fetters.

He now, therefore, but too late, perceives that his regards should have been more cool, and his hatred less violent ; that the truly wise seldom court romantic friendships with the good, and avoid, if possible, the resentment even of the wicked : every moment gives him fresh instances that the bonds of friendship are broken if drawn too closely, and that those whom he has treated with disrespect more than retaliate the injury. At length, therefore, he is obliged to confess that he has declared war upon the vicious half of mankind, without being able to form an alliance among the virtuous to espouse his quarrel.

Our book-taught philosopher, however, is now too far advanced to recede ; and though poverty be the just consequence of the many enemies his conduct has created, yet he is resolved to meet it without shrinking. Philosophers

have described poverty in most charming colours, and even his vanity is touched in thinking that he shall show the world in himself one more example of patience, fortitude, and resignation. 'Come then, O poverty! for what is there in thee dreadful to the wise? Temperance, health, and frugality walk in thy train; cheerfulness and liberty are ever thy companions. Shall any be ashamed of thee, of whom Cincinnatus was not ashamed? The running brook, the herbs of the field, can amply satisfy nature; man wants but little nor that little long. Come then, O poverty, while kings stand by, and gaze with admiration at the true philosopher's resignation.

The poor man now finds, that he can get no kings to look at him while he is eating; he finds, that in proportion as he grows poor, the world turns its back upon him, and gives him leave to act the philosopher in all the majesty of solitude. It might be agreeable enough to play the philosopher while we are conscious that mankind are spectators; but what signifies wearing the mask of sturdy contentment, and mounting the stage of restraint, when not one creature will assist at the exhibition? Thus is he forsaken of men, while his fortitude wants the satisfaction even of self-applause; for either he does not feel his present calamities, and that is natural insensibility; or he disguises his feelings, and that is dissimulation.

Spleen now begins to take up the man: not distinguishing in his resentments, he regards all mankind with detestation, and commencing man-hater, seeks solitude to be at liberty to rail.

It has been said, that he who retires to solitude is either a beast or an angel. The censure is too severe, and the praise unmerited; the discontented being, who retires from society, is generally some good natured man, who has begun life without experience, and knew not how to gain it in his intercourse with mankind. Adieu.

VI.

THE CANDIDATE FOR PARLIAMENT.

William Cowper, 1731—1800.

[William Cowper was an English poet and letter-writer. He was a barrister, but never appeared in court owing to nervousness. He suffered from fits of insanity for ten years, with occasional lucid intervals. His best poem is the *Task*, and among his shorter poems the most popular are *John Gilpin* and the *Loss of the Royal George*.

As a poet, Cowper is essentially the painter of domestic life. As a letter-writer he is unrivalled. His letters are perhaps the most charming in the English language. They show him in the most amiable light, and invest every trifle which surrounds him with a halo of purity and goodness.]

MY DEAR FRIEND,—It being his majesty's pleasure that I should yet have another opportunity to write before he dissolves the parliament, I avail myself of it with all possible alacrity. I thank you for your last, which was not the less welcome for coming like an extraordinary gazette, at a time when it was not expected.

As when the sea is uncommonly agitated, the water finds its way into creeks and holes of rocks, which in its calmer state it never reaches; in like manner the effect of those turbulent times is felt even at Orchard side, where in general we live as undisturbed by the political element, as shrimps or cockles that have been accidentally deposited in some hollow beyond the water mark, by the usual dashing of the waves. We were sitting yesterday after dinner, the two ladies and myself, very composedly, and without the least apprehension of any such intrusion in our snug parlour, one lady knitting, the other netting, and the gentleman winding worsted, when to our unspeakable surprise a mob appeared before the window; a smart rap was heard at the

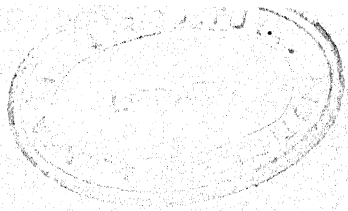
door, the boys halloo'd and the maid announced Mr. Grenville. Puss was unfortunately let out of her box, so that the candidate, with all his good friends at his heels, was refused admittance at the grand entry, and referred to the back door, as the only possible way of approach.

Candidates are creatures not very susceptible of affronts, and would rather, I suppose, climb in at a window, than be absolutely excluded. In a minute, the yard, the kitchen, and the parlour, were filled. Mr. Grenville advancing toward me shook me by the hand with a degree of cordiality that was extremely seducing. As soon as he and as many ^{charm} more as could find chairs were seated, he began to open the intent of his visit. I told him I had no vote, for which he readily gave me credit. I assured him I had no influence, which he was not equally inclined to believe, and the less, no doubt, because Mr. Ashburner, the drapier, addressing himself to me at this moment, informed me that I had a great deal. Supposing that I could not be possessed of such a treasure without knowing it, I ventured to confirm my first assertion, by saying, that if I had any I was utterly at a loss to imagine where it could be, or wherein it consisted. Thus ended the conference. Mr. Grenville squeezed me by the hand again, kissed the ladies, and withdrew. He kissed likewise the maid in the kitchen, and seemed upon the whole a most loving, kissing, kind-hearted gentleman. He is very young, genteel, and handsome. He has a pair of very good eyes in his head, which not being sufficient as it should seem for the many nice and difficult purposes of a senator, he has a third also, which he wore suspended by a ribband from his buttonhole. The boys halloo'd, the dogs barked, Puss scampered, the hero, with his long train of obsequious followers, withdrew. We made ourselves very merry with the adventure, and in a short time settled into our former tranquillity, never probably to be thus interrupted more. I thought myself, however, happy in being able to affirm truly that I had not that

influence for which he sued ; and which, had I been possessed of it, with my present views of the dispute between the Crown and the Commons, I must have refused him, for he is on the side of the former. It is comfortable to be of no consequence in a world where one cannot exercise any without disoblighing somebody. The town however seems to be much at his service, and if he be equally successful throughout the county, he will undoubtedly gain his election. Mr. Ashburner perhaps was a little mortified, because it was evident that I owed the honour of this visit to his misrepresentation of my importance. But had he thought proper to assure Mr. Grenville that I had three heads, I should not I suppose have been bound to produce them.

Mr. Scott, who you say was so much admired in your pulpit, would be equally admired in his own, at least by all capable judges, were he not so apt to be angry with his congregation. This hurts him, and had he the understanding and eloquence of Paul himself, would still hurt him. He seldom, hardly ever indeed, preaches a gentle, well-tempered sermon but I hear it highly commended : but warmth of temper, indulged to a degree that may be called scolding, defeats the end of preaching. It is a misapplication of his powers, which it also cripples, and teases away his hearers. But he is a good man, and may perhaps outgrow it.

Many thanks for the worsted, which is excellent. We are as well as a spring hardly less severe than the severest winter will give us leave to be. With our united love, we conclude ourselves yours and Mrs. Newton's affectionate and faithful.



VII.

WITCHES AND OTHER NIGHT FEARS.

(Adapted)

Charles Lamb, 1775—1834.

[Charles Lamb was a distinguished English essayist and humorist. His sister, Mary, was his constant companion, and the famous *Tales from Shakespeare* was the joint production of the two. His attempts at verse were wholly unsuccessful, and his fame now rests mainly on his Essays which he published under the name of *Essays of Elia*. For quaint unconventional humour, Lamb has perhaps never been excelled, and the essay quoted here furnishes one of the finest illustrations of this quality.]

We are too hasty when we set down our ancestors in the gross for fools, for the monstrous inconsistencies (as they seem to us) involved in their creed of witchcraft. In the relations of this visible world we find them to have been as rational and shrewd to detect an historic anomaly as ourselves. But when once the invisible world was supposed to be open, and the lawless agency of bad spirits assumed, what measures of probability, of decency, of fitness, or proportion—of that which distinguishes the likely from the palpable absurd—could they have to guide them in the rejection or admission of any particular testimony?

From my childhood I was extremely inquisitive about witches and witch-stories. My maid, and more legendary aunt, supplied me with good store. But I shall mention the accident which directed my curiosity originally into this channel. In my father's book-closet the history of the Bible by Stackhouse occupied a distinguished station. The pictures with which it abounds—one of the ark, in particular, and another of Solomon's temple, delineated with all the

fidelity of ocular admeasurement, as if the artist had been upon the spot—attracted my childish attention. There was a picture, too, of the Witch raising up Samuel, which I wish that I had never seen. We shall come to that hereafter. Stackhouse is in two huge tomes ; and there was a pleasure in removing folios of that magnitude, which, with infinite straining, was as much as I could manage, from the situation which they occupied upon an upper shelf. I have not met with the work from that time to this, but I remember it consisted of Old Testament stories, orderly set down with the *objection* appended to each story, and the *solution* of the objection regularly tacked to that. The *objection* was a summary of whatever difficulties had been opposed to the credibility of the history by the shrewdness of ancient or modern infidelity, drawn up with an almost complimentary excess of candour. The *solution* was brief, modest, and satisfactory. The bane and antidote were both before you. The habit of expecting objections to every passage set me upon starting more objections, for the glory of finding a solution of my own for them. I became staggered and perplexed, a sceptic in long-coats. The pretty Bible stories which I had read, or heard read in church, lost their purity and sincerity of impression, and were turned into so many historic or chronologic theses to be defended against whatever impugnors. I was not to disbelieve them, but—the next thing to that—I was to be quite sure that some one or other would or had disbelieved them. Next to making a child an infidel is the letting him know that there are infidels at all. Credulity is the man's weakness, but the child's strength. O, how ugly sound scriptural doubts from the mouth of a babe and a suckling!—I should have lost myself in these mazes, and have pined away, I think, with such unfit sustenance as these husks afforded, but for a fortunate piece of ill-fortune which about this time befell me. Turning over the picture of the ark with too much haste, I unhappily made a breach in its ingenious fabric—driving my

inconsiderate fingers right through the two larger quadrupeds, the elephant and the camel, that stare (as well they might) out of the two last windows next the steerage in that unique piece of naval architecture. Stackhouse was henceforth locked up, and became an interdicted treasure. With the book, the *objections* and *solutions* gradually cleared out of my head, and have seldom returned since in any force to trouble me. But there was one impression which I had imbibed from Stackhouse which no lock or bar could shut out, and which was destined to try my childish nerves rather more seriously.—That detestable picture ! -

I was dreadfully alive to nervous terrors. The night-time, solitude, and the dark, were my hell. The sufferings I endured in this nature would justify the expression. I never laid my head on my pillow, I suppose, from the fourth to the seventh or eighth year of my life—so far as memory serves in things so long ago—without an assurance, which realized its own prophecy, of seeing some frightful spectre I durst not, even in the day-light, once enter the chamber where I slept, without my face turned to the window, aversely from the bed where my witch-ridden pillow was. Parents do not know what they do when they leave tender babes alone to go to sleep in the dark. The feeling about for a friendly arm—the hoping for a familiar voice—when they wake screaming—and find none to soothe them—what a terrible shaking it is to their poor nerves ! The keeping them up till midnight, through candle-light and the unwholesome hours, as they are called,—would, I am satisfied, in a medical point of view, prove the better caution.—That detestable picture, as I have said, gave the fashion to my dreams—if dreams they were—for the scene of them was invariably the room in which I lay. Had I never met with the picture, the fears would have come self-pictured in some shape or other—

Headless bear, black man, or ape—

but, as it was, my imaginations took that form.—It is not book, or picture, or the stories of foolish servants, which create these terrors in children. They can at most but give them a direction.

Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimæras dire may reproduce themselves in the brain of superstition— but they were there before. They are transcripts, types—the archetypes are in us and eternal. How else should the recital of that, which we know in a waking sense to be false, come to affect us at all ?

Is it that we naturally conceive terror from such objects, considered in their capacity of being able to inflict upon us bodily injury ?— O, least of all ! These terrors are of older standing. They date beyond body— or, without the body, they would have been the same. All the cruel, tormenting, defined devils in Dante—tearing, mangling, choking, stifling, scorching demons— are they one half so fearful to the spirit of a man, as the simple idea of a spirit unembodied following him—

Like one that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turn'd round walks on
And turns no more his head ;
Because he knows a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.*

That the kind of fear here treated of is purely spiritual—that it is strong in proportion as it is objectless upon earth—that it predominates in the period of sinless infancy—are difficulties, the solution of which might afford some probable insight into our ante-mundane condition, and a peep at least into the shadowland of pre-existence.

My night-fancies have long ceased to be afflictive. I confess an occasional nightmare ; but I do not, as in early youth, keep a stud of them. Fiendish faces, with the extinguished taper, will come and look at me ; but I know

* Coleridge's Ancient Mariner.

them for mockeries, even while I cannot elude their presence, and I fight and grapple with them. For the credit of my imagination, I am almost ashamed to say how tame and prosaic my dreams are grown. They are never romantic, seldom even rural. They are of architecture and of buildings—cities abroad, which I have never seen and hardly have hoped to see. I have traversed, for the seeming length of a natural day, Rome, Amsterdam, Paris, Lisbon—their churches, palaces, squares, market-places, shops, suburbs, ruins with an inexpressible sense of delight—a map-like distinctness of trace, and a day-light vividness of vision, that was all but being awake.—I have formerly travelled among the Westmoreland fells—my highest Alps, but they are objects too mighty for the grasp of my dreaming recognition; and I have again and again awoke with ineffectual struggles of the inner eye, to make out a shape, in any way whatever, of Helvellyn. Methought I was in that country, but the mountains were gone. The poverty of my dreams mortifies me.

The degree of the soul's creativeness in sleep might furnish no whimsical criterion of the quantum of poetical faculty resident in the same soul waking. An old gentleman, a friend of mine, and a humorist, used to carry this notion so far, that when he saw any stripling of his acquaintance ambitious of becoming a poet, his first question would be,—“Young man, what sort of dreams have you?” I have so much faith in my old friend's theory, that when I feel that idle vein returning upon me, presently subside into my proper element of prose.

VIII
ON GOING A JOURNEY.

William Hazlitt, 1778—1830.

[William Hazlitt was an English critic and essayist, who was formerly a painter. He first appeared in the guise of a philosophical writer, and also delivered a series of lectures on philosophical subjects. But he afterwards became a critic of art and literature. His *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays* was regarded as a valuable contribution to Shakespearian criticism. His *Table Talk* is a delightful volume of miscellaneous essays, and his prose style is still one of the most fascinating to be found in modern English.]

One of the pleasantest things in the world is going a journey ; but I like to go by myself. I can enjoy society in a room ; but out of doors, nature is company enough for me. I am then never less alone than when alone.

"The fields his study, nature was his book."

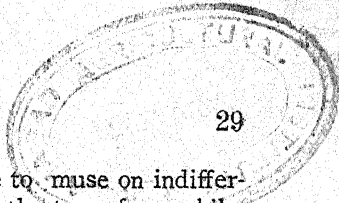
I cannot see the wit of walking and talking at the same time. When I am in the country, I wish to vegetate like the country. I am not for criticising hedge-rows and black cattle. I go out of town in order to forget the town and all that is in it. There are those who for this purpose go to watering-places, and carry the metropolis with them. I like more elbow-room, and fewer incumbrances. I like solitude, when I give myself up to it, for the sake of solitude ; nor do I ask for

"a friend in my retreat
Whom I may whisper solitude is sweet."

The soul of a journey is liberty, perfect liberty, to think, feel, do just as one pleases. We go a journey chiefly to be free of all impediments and of all inconvenience ; to leave ourselves behind, much more to get rid of others. It is

one word
used
difficult
S. 100

incumbrances



because I want a little breathing-space to muse on indifferent matters that I absent myself from the town for a while, without feeling at a loss the moment I am left by myself. Instead of a friend in a post-chaise or in a Tilbury, to exchange good things with, and vary the same stale topics over again, for once let me have a truce with impertinence. Give me the clear blue sky over my head, and the green turf beneath my feet, a winding road before me, and a three hours' march to dinner—and then to thinking! It is hard if I cannot start some game on these lone heaths. I laugh, I run, I leap, I sing for joy. From the point of yonder rolling cloud, I plunge into my past being, and revel there, as the sun-burnt Indian plunges headlong into the wave that wafts him to his native shore. Then long-forgotten things, like “sunken wrack and sumless treasures,” burst upon my eager sight, and I begin to feel, think, and be myself again. Instead of an awkward silence, broken by attempts at wit or dull commonplaces, mine is that undisturbed silence of the heart which alone is perfect eloquence. No one likes puns, alliterations, antithesis, argument, and analysis better than I do; but I sometimes had rather be without them. “Leave, oh, leave me to my repose!” I have just now other business in hand, which would seem idle to you, but is with me “very stuff of the conscience”.

*Two Stale
moments
of office
nausea*

*all the
words
begin
with the
same
letter*

Is not this wild rose sweet without a comment? Does not this daisy leap to my heart set in its coat of emerald? Yet if I were to explain to you the circumstance that has so endeared it to me, you would only smile. Had I not better then keep it to myself, and let it serve me to brood over, from here to yonder craggy point, and from thence onward to the far distant horizon? I should be but bad company all that way, and therefore prefer being alone. I have heard it said that you may, when the moody fit comes on, walk or ride on by yourself, and indulge your reveries. But this looks like a breach of manners, a neglect of others, and you are thinking all the time that you ought to rejoin

your party. "Out upon such half-faced fellowship," say I. I like to be either entirely by myself, or entirely at the disposal of others; to talk or be silent, to walk or sit still, to be sociable or solitary.

all of a sudden
I was pleased with an observation of Mr. Cobbett's, that "he thought it a bad French custom to drink our wine with our meals, and that an Englishman ought to do only one thing at a time." So I cannot talk and think, or indulge in melancholy musing and lively conversation by fits and starts. "Let me have a companion of my way," says Sterne, "were it but to remark how the shadows lengthen as the sun declines." It is beautifully said: but in my opinion, this continual comparing of notes interferes with the involuntary impression of things upon the mind, and hurts the sentiment. *note, here refers to the comparison*

note covering of the road
If you only hint what you feel in a kind of dumb show, it is insipid: if you have to explain it, it is making a toil of a pleasure. You cannot read the book of nature, without being perpetually put to the trouble of translating it for the benefit of others. I am for the synthetical method on a journey, in preference to the analytical. I am content to lay in a stock of ideas then, and to examine and anatomise them afterwards. I want to see my vague notices float like the down of the thistle before the breeze, and not to have them entangled in the briars and thorns of controversy. For once, I like to have it all my own way; and this is impossible unless you are alone, or in such company as I do not covet. I have no objection to argue a point with anyone for twenty miles of measured road, but not for pleasure. If you remark the scent of a beanfield crossing the road, perhaps your fellow-traveller has no smell. If you point to a distant object, perhaps he is shortsighted, and has to take out his glass to look at it. There is a feeling in the air, a tone in the colour of a cloud which hits your fancy, but the effect of which you are unable to account

for. There is then no sympathy, but an uneasy craving after it, and a dissatisfaction which pursues you on the way, and in the end probably produces ill-humour.

I have no objection to go to see ruins, aqueducts, pictures, in company with a friend or a party, but rather the contrary, for the former reason reversed. They are intelligible matters, and will bear taking about. The sentiment here is not tacit, but communicable and overt. Salisbury Plain is barren of criticism, but Stonehenge will bear a discussion antiquarian, picturesque, and philosophical. In setting out on a party of pleasure, the first consideration always is where shall we go: in taking a solitary ramble, the question is what we shall meet with by the way. "The mind is its own place"; nor are we anxious to arrive at the end of our journey. I can myself do the honour indifferently well to works of art and curiosity. I once took a party to Oxford with no mean success—showed them that seat of the Muses at a distance

"With glistening spires and pinnacles adorn'd."—

descanted on the learned air that breathes from the grassy quadrangles and stone walls of halls and colleges—was at home in the Bodleian; and at Blenheim quite superseded the powdered cicerone that attended us, and that pointed in vain with his wand to commonplace beauties in matchless pictures.

As another exception to the above reasoning, I should not feel confident in venturing on a journey in a foreign country without a companion. I should want at intervals to hear the sound of my own language. There is an involuntary antipathy in the mind of an Englishman to foreign manners and notions that requires the assistance of social sympathy to carry it off. As the distance from home increases, this relief, which was at first a luxury, becomes a passion and an appetite. A person would almost feel stifled to find himself in the deserts of Arabia without

friends and countrymen: there must be allowed to be something in the view of Athens or old Rome that claims the utterance of speech: and I own that the Pyramids are too mighty for any single contemplation. In such situations, so opposite to all one's ordinary train of ideas, one seems a species by one's self, a limb torn off from society, unless one can meet with instant fellowship and support.

Yet I did not feel this want or craving very pressing once, when I first set my foot on the laughing shores of France. Calais was peopled with novelty and delight. The confused, busy murmur of the place was like oil and wine poured into my ears; nor did the mariners' hymn, which was sung from the top of an old crazy vessel in the harbour, as the sun went down, send an alien sound into my soul. I only breathed the air of general humanity. I walked over "the vine-covered hills and gay regions of France," erect and satisfied; for the image of man was not cast down and chained to the food of arbitrary thrones: I was at no loss for language, for that of all the great schools of painting was open to me. The whole is vanished like a shade. Pictures, heroes, glory, freedom, all are fled: nothing remains but the Bourbons and the French people!

There is undoubtedly a sensation in travelling into foreign parts that is to be had nowhere else: but it is more pleasing at the time than lasting. Dr. Johnson remarked how little foreign travel added to the facilities of conversation in those who had been abroad. In fact, the time we have spent there is both delightful and in one sense instructive; but it appears to be cut out of our substantial, downright existence, and never to join kindly on to it. We are not the same, but another, and perhaps more enviable individual, all the time we are out of our own country. We are lost to ourselves, as well as our friends. So the poet somewhat quaintly sings,

"Out of my country and myself I go."

Those who wish to forget painful thoughts, do well to absent themselves for a while from the ties and objects that recall them: but we can be said only to fulfil our destiny in the place that gave us birth. I should on this account like well enough to spend the whole of my life in travelling abroad, if I could anywhere borrow another life to spend afterwards at home!

Wordsworth in the day of his youth.

To Type of the world who have been born
True to the kindred banks of heaven & home

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IX

RURAL LIFE IN ENGLAND.

Washington Irving, 1783—1859.

[Washington Irving is the first of native American writers to attract the admiration of Europe. He began his literary career by writing some sketches for the "New York Morning Chronicle." In 1809 he published the humorous *History of New York by Diedrich Knickerbocker*, which instantly made him one of the most popular American writers. After having travelled over England he began writing his famous *Sketch Book* which became so rapidly popular both in America and England that Irving's reputation was made. His other important works were his *Life of Columbus* and the *Conquest of Granada*.

As a writer, his style is distinguished by his powers of observation, his subtle humour, his rich imagination, and his correctness of expression.

His picture of English life (of which the following essay is a specimen) must be taken as the outcome of a sentimental and romantic mind, bent on depicting only the brighter and more picturesque side of what it saw. The fact is that his inquiries could never have penetrated to the lower strata of the people.]

London
The stranger who would form a correct opinion of the English character, must not confine his observations to the metropolis. He must go forth into the country; he must sojourn in villages and hamlets; he must visit castles, villas, farm-houses, cottages; he must wander through parks and gardens; along hedges and green lanes; he must loiter about country churches; attend fairs, and other rural festivals; and meet the people in all their conditions, and all their habits and humours.

In some countries the large cities absorb the wealth and fashion of the nation; they are the only fixed abodes of elegant and intelligent society, and the country is inhabited

almost entirely by boorish peasantry. In England, on the contrary, the metropolis is a mere gathering-place, or general rendezvous of the polite classes, where they devote a small portion of the year to a hurry of gaiety, and having indulged this kind of carnival, return again to the apparently more congenial habits of rural life. The various orders of society are therefore diffused over the whole surface of the kingdom, and the most retired neighbourhoods afford specimens of the different ranks.

The English, in fact, are strongly gifted with the rural feeling. They possess a quick sensibility to the beauties of nature, and a keen relish for the pleasures and employments of the country. This passion seems inherent in them. Even the inhabitants of cities, born and brought up among brick walls and bustling streets, enter with facility into rural habits, and evince a tact for rural occupation. The merchant has his snug retreat in the vicinity of the metropolis, where he often displays as much pride and zeal in the cultivation of his flower-garden, and the maturing of his fruits, as he does in the conduct of his business and the success of a commercial enterprise. Even those less fortunate individuals, who are doomed to pass their lives in the midst of din and traffic, contrive to have something that shall remind them of the green aspect of nature. In the most dark and dingy quarters of the city, the drawing-room window resembles frequently a bank of flowers; every spot capable of vegetation has its grass-plot and flower-bed; and every square its mimic park, laid out with picturesque taste, and gleaming with refreshing verdure.

Those who see the Englishman only in town are apt to form an unfavourable opinion of his social character. He is either absorbed in business, or distracted by the thousand engagements that dissipate time, thought, and feeling, in this huge metropolis. He has, therefore, too commonly a look of hurry and abstraction. Wherever he happens to be,

he is on the point of going somewhere else; at the moment he is talking on one subject, his mind is wandering to another; and while paying a friendly visit, he is calculating how he shall economise time so as to pay other visits in the morning. An immense metropolis, like London, is calculated to make men selfish and uninteresting. In their casual and transient meetings they can but deal briefly in common-places. They present but the cold superficialities of character—its rich and genial qualities have no time to be warmed into a flow.

It is in the country that the Englishman gives scope to his natural feelings. He breaks loose gladly from the cold formalities of town; throws off his habits of shy reserve, and becomes joyous and free-hearted. He manages to collect round him all the conveniences and elegancies of polite life, and to banish its restraints. His country-seat abounds with every requisite, either for studious retirement, tasteful gratification, or rural exercise. Books, paintings, music, horses, dogs, and sporting implements of all kinds, are at hand. He puts no constraint either upon his guests or himself, but in the true spirit of hospitality provides the means of enjoyment, and leaves every one to partake according to his inclination.

The taste of the English in the cultivation of land, and in what is called landscape gardening, is unrivalled. They have studied nature intently, and discover an exquisite sense of her beautiful forms and harmonious combinations. Those charms, which in other countries she lavishes in wild solitudes, are here assembled round the haunts of domestic life. They seem to have caught her coy and furtive ^{secret} graces, and spread them, like witchery, about their rural abodes.

Nothing can be more imposing than the magnificence of English park scenery. Vast lawns that extend like sheets of vivid green, with here and there clumps of gigantic trees, heaping up rich piles of foliage: the solemn pomp of groves

and woodland glades, with the deer trooping in silent herds across them ; the hare, bounding away to the covert ; or the pheasant, suddenly bursting upon the wing : the brook, taught to wind in natural meanderings, or expand into a glassy lake : the sequestered pool, reflecting the quivering trees, with the yellow leaf sleeping on its bosom, and the trout roaming fearlessly about its limpid waters, while some rustic temple or statue, grown green and dank with age, gives an air of classic sanctity to the seclusion.

These are but a few of the features of park scenery ; but what most delights me, is the creative talent with which the English decorate the abodes middle life. The rudest habitation, the most unpromising and scanty portion of land, in the hands of an Englishman of taste, becomes a little paradise. With a nicely discriminating eye, he seizes at once upon its capabilities, and pictures in his mind the future landscape. The sterile spot grows into loveliness under his hand ; and yet the operations of art which produce the effect are scarcely to be perceived. The cherishing and training of some trees ; the cautious pruning of others ; the distribution of flowers and plants of tender and graceful foliage ; the introduction of a green slope of velvet turf ; the partial opening to a peep of blue distance, or silver gleam of water : all these are managed with a delicate tact, like the magic touchings with which a painter finishes up a favourite picture.

The residence of people of fortune and refinement in the country has diffused a degree of taste and elegance in rural economy, that descends to the lowest class. The very labourer, with his thatched cottage and narrow slip of ground, attends to their embellishment. The trim hedge, the grass-plot before the door, the little flower-bed bordered with snug box, the woodbine trained up against the wall, and hanging its blossoms about the lattice, the plot of flowers in the window, the holly, providentially planted about the

a plant

house, to cheat winter of its dreariness, and to throw in a semblance of green summer to cheer the fireside : all these bespeak the influence of taste, flowing down from high sources, and pervading the lowest levels of the public mind. If ever Love, as poets sing, delights to visit a cottage, it must be the cottage of an English peasant.

The fondness for rural life among the higher classes of the English has had a great and salutary effect upon the national character. I do not know a finer race of men than the English gentlemen. Instead of the softness and effeminacy which characterise the men of rank in most countries, they exhibit a union of elegance and strength, a robustness of frame and freshness of complexion, which I am inclined to attribute to their living so much in the open air, and pursuing so eagerly the invigorating recreations of the country. These hardy exercises produce also a healthful tone of mind and spirits, and a manliness and simplicity of manners, which even the follies and dissipations of the town cannot easily pervert, and can never entirely destroy. In the country, too, the different orders of society seem to approach more freely, to be more disposed to blend and operate favourably upon each other. The distinctions between them do not appear to be so marked and impassable as in the cities. The manner in which property has been distributed into small estates and farms has established a regular gradation from the nobleman, through the classes of gentry, small landed proprietors, and substantial farmers, down to the labouring peasantry, and while it has thus banded the extremes of society together, has infused into each intermediate rank a spirit of independence. This, it must be confessed, is not so universally the case at present as it was formerly ; the larger estates having, in late years of distress, absorbed the smaller ; and, in some parts of the country, almost annihilated the sturdy race of small farmers. These, however, I believe, are but casual breaks in the general system I have mentioned.

In rural occupation there is nothing mean and debasing. It leads a man forth among scenes of natural grandeur and beauty ; it leaves him to the workings of his own mind, operated upon by the purest and most elevating of external influences. Such a man may be simple and rough, but he cannot be vulgar. The man of refinement, therefore, finds nothing revolting in an intercourse with the lower orders in rural life, as he does when he casually mingles with the lower orders of cities. He lays aside his distance and reserve, and is glad to waive the distinctions of rank, and to enter into the honest, heartfelt enjoyments of common life. Indeed, the very amusements of the country bring men more and more together ; and the sounds of hound and horn blend all feelings into harmony. I believe this is one great reason why the nobility and gentry are more popular among the inferior orders in England than they are in any other country ; and why the latter have endured so many excessive pressures and extremities without repining more generally at the unequal distribution of fortune and privilege.

To this mingling of cultivated and rustic society may also be attributed the rural feeling that runs through British literature ; the frequent use of illustrations from rural life ; those incomparable descriptions of nature that abound in the British poets, that have continued down from *The Flower and the Leaf* of Chaucer, and have brought to us all the freshness and fragrance of the dewy landscape. The pastoral writers of other countries appear as if they had paid Nature an occasional visit, and become acquainted with her general charms ; but the British poets have lived and revelled with her—they have wooed her in her most secret haunts—they have watched her minutest caprices. A spray could not tremble in the breeze—a leaf could not rustle to the ground—a diamond drop could not patter in the stream—a fragrance could not exhale from the humble violet, nor

a daisy unfold its crimson tints to the morning, but it has been noticed by these impassioned and delicate observers, and wrought up into some beautiful morality.

The effect of this devotion of elegant minds to rural occupations has been wonderful on the face of the country. A great part of the island is rather level, and would be monotonous, were it not for the charms of culture: but it is studded and gemmed, as it were, with castles and palaces, and embroidered with parks and gardens. It does not abound in grand and sublime prospects, but rather in little home scenes of rural and sheltered quiet. Every antique farm-house and moss-grown cottage is a picture; and as the roads are continually winding, and the view is shut in by groves and hedges, the eye is delighted by a continual succession of small landscapes of captivating loveliness.

The great charm, however, of English scenery is the moral feeling that seems to pervade it. It is associated in the mind with ideas of order, of quiet, of sober, well-established principles, of hoary usage and reverend custom. Everything seems to be the growth of ages of regular and peaceful existence. The old church of remote architecture, with its low, massive portal, its tower, its windows rich with tracery and painted glass in scrupulous preservation, its stately monuments of warriors and worthies of the olden time, ancestors of the present lords of the soil; its tombstones, recording successive generations of sturdy yeomanry, whose progeny still plough the same fields, and kneel at the same altar—the parsonage, a quaint, irregular pile, partly antiquated, but repaired and altered in the tastes of various ages and occupants—the footpath leading from the churchyard, across pleasant fields, and along shady hedge-rows, according to an immemorial right of way—the neighbouring village, with its venerable cottages, its public green sheltered by trees, under which the forefathers of the present race have sported—the antique family mansion,

Place
living
a legacy
mansion

standing apart in some little rural domain, but looking down with a protecting air on the surrounding scene : all these common features of English landscape evince a calm and settled security, and hereditary transmission of home-bred virtues and local attachments, that speak deeply and touchingly for the moral character of the nation.

It is a pleasing sight on a Sunday morning, when the bell is sending its sober melody across the quiet fields, to behold the peasantry in their best finery, with ruddy faces and modest cheerfulness, thronging tranquilly along the green lanes to church ; but it is still more pleasing to see them in the evenings, gathering about their cottage doors, and appearing to exult in the humble comforts and embellishments which their own hands have spread around them.

X.

A 'NOW' : DESCRIPTIVE OF A HOT DAY.

Leigh Hunt, 1784—1859.

[James Henry Leigh Hunt was an English poet, critic, and miscellaneous writer. He was for some time joint-editor of the *Examiner* newspaper, which he and his brother had established. He was sentenced to imprisonment for a political article attacking the Prince Regent, and this made him very popular and won him the sympathy of poets like Byron, Keats, Shelley and Moore. Leigh Hunt wrote much, but no work of his is of lasting worth, except perhaps his Autobiography, published in 1850. His writings are graceful, sprightly, and full of fancy. Though not possessing much soul and emotion, they have true life and genius, while here and there we come across gleams of wit, tenderness, and grace. His essays and miscellanies are truly charming.]

Now the rosy-(and lazy-) fingered Aurora, issuing from her saffron house, calls up the moist vapours to surround her, and goes veiled with them as long as she can; till Phœbus, coming forth in his power, looks everything out of the sky, and holds sharp, uninterrupted empire from his throne of beams.

Now the mower begins to make his sweeping cuts more slowly, and resorts oftener to the beer. Now the carter sleeps a-top of his load of hay, or plods with double slouch of shoulder, looking out with eyes winking under his shading hat, and with a hitch upward of one side of his mouth. Now the little girl at her grandmother's cottage-door watches the coaches that go by, with her hand held up over her sunny forehead. Now labourers look well resting in their white shirts at the doors of rural ale-houses. Now an elm is fine there, with a seat under it; and horses drink out of the trough, stretching their yearning necks with loosened collars; and the traveller calls for his glass of ale, having been without one for more than ten minutes; and his horse stands wincing at the flies, giving sharp shivers of his skin, and moving to and fro his ineffectual docked tail; and now

Miss Betty Wilson, the host's daughter, comes streaming forth in a flowered gown and ear-rings, carrying with four of her beautiful fingers the foaming glass, for which, after the traveller has drunk it, she receives with an indifferent eye, looking another way, the lawful two-pence.

Now grasshoppers 'fry,' as Dryden says. Now cattle stand in water, and ducks are envied. Now boots, and shoes, and trees by the road-side, are thick with dust; and dogs, rolling in it, after issuing out of the water, into which they have been thrown to fetch sticks, come scattering horror among the legs of the spectators. Now a fellow who finds he has three miles further to go in a pair of tight shoes is in a pretty situation.

Now rooms with the sun upon them become intolerable; and the apothecary's apprentice, with a bitterness beyond aloes, thinks of the pond he used to bathe in at school. Now men with powdered heads (especially if thick) envy those that are unpowdered, and stop to wipe them uphill, with countenances that seem to expostulate with destiny. Now boys assemble round the village pump with a ladle to it, and delight to make a forbidden splash and get wet through the shoes. Now also they make suckers of leather, and bathe all day long in rivers and ponds, and make mighty fishings for 'tittle-bats.'

Now the bee, as he hums along, seems to be talking heavily of the heat. Now doors and brick-walls are burning to the hand; and a walled lane, with dust and broken bottles in it, near a brick-field, is a thing not to be thought of. Now a green lane, on the contrary, thick-set with hedge-row elms, and having the noise of a brook 'rumbling in pebble-stone,' is one of the pleasantest things in the world.

Now in town, gossips talk more than ever to one another, in rooms, in door-ways, and out of window, always beginning the conversation with saying that the heat is overpowering. Now blinds are let down, and doors thrown

open, and flannel waistcoats left off, and cold meat preferred to hot, and wonder expressed why tea continues so refreshing, and people delight to sliver lettuces into bowls, and apprentices water doorways with tin canisters that lay several atoms of dust.

Now, the water-cart, jumbling along the middle of the street, and jolting the showers out of its box of water, really does something. Now fruiterers' shops and dairies look pleasant, and ices are the only things to those who can get them. Now ladies loiter in baths; and people make presents of flowers; and wine is put into ice; and the after-dinner lounge recreates his head with applications of perfumed water out of long-necked bottles.

Now the lounge, who cannot resist riding his new horse, feels his boots burn him. Now buck-skins are not the lawn of Cos. Now jockeys, walking in greatcoats to lose flesh, curse inwardly. Now five fat people in a stage-coach hate the sixth fat one who is coming in, and think he has no right to be so large. Now clerks in office do nothing but drink soda-water and spruce-beer, and read the newspaper.

Now the old-clothesman drops his solitary cry more deeply into the areas on the hot and forsaken side of the street: and bakers look vicious: and cooks are aggravated; and the steam of a tavern-kitchen catches hold of us like the breath of Tartarus.

Now delicate skins are beset with gnats; and boys make their sleeping companion start up, with playing a burning-glass on his hand; and blacksmiths are super-carbonated; and cobblers in their stalls almost feel a wish to be transplanted; and butter is too easy to spread; and the dragoons wonder whether the Romans liked their helmets; and old ladies, with their lappets unpinned, walk along in a state of dilapidation; and the servant maids are afraid they look vulgarly hot; and the author, who has a plate of strawberries brought him, finds that he has come to the end of his writing.

XI

INTERVIEW WITH A MALAY.

Thomas De Quincey, 1785—1859.

[Thomas De Quincey was an English author who devoted himself to literature, and few writers employed their pens upon so many and such varied subjects. His famous "Confessions of an English Opium-eater" reveal much of the history of his earlier years, and were first published in 1821. From that time De Quincey constantly kept his name before the public, writing on metaphysics, economics, philosophy and biography. His essays on these subjects are many. His style is graceful and often forcible. The extract that follows is taken from the *English Opium-eater*.]

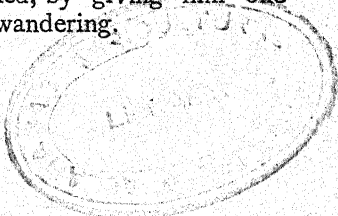
One day a Malay knocked at my door. What business a Malay could have to transact among English mountains, I cannot conjecture; but possibly he was on his road to a seaport, about forty miles distant. The servant who opened the door to him was a young girl born and bred among the mountains, who had never seen an Asiatic dress of any sort: his turban, therefore, confounded her not a little; and, as it turned out that his attainments in English were exactly of the same extent as hers in the Malay, there seemed to be an impassable gulf fixed between all communication of ideas, if either party had happened to possess any. In this dilemma, the girl recollecting the reputed learning of her master (and, doubtless, giving the credit for a knowledge of all languages of the earth, besides, perhaps, a few of the lunar ones), came and gave me to understand that there was a sort of demon below, whom she clearly imagined that my art could exorcise from the house. I did not immediately go down; but when I did, the group which presented itself, arranged as it was by accident, though not very elaborate, took hold of my fancy

Dr. De Quincey
some of the
spirit

and my eye in a way that none of the statuesque attitudes exhibited in the ballets at the opera-house, though so ostentatiously complex, had ever done. In a cottage kitchen, but panelled on the wall with dark wood that from age and rubbing resembled oak, and looking more like a rustic hall of entrance than a kitchen, stood the Malay—his turban and loose trowsers of dingy white relieved upon the dark panelling: he had placed himself nearer to the girl than she seemed to relish, though her native spirit of mountain intrepidity contended with the feelings of simple awe which her countenance expressed as she gazed upon the tiger-cat before her. And a more striking picture there could not be imagined than the beautiful English face of the girl, and its exquisite fairness, together with her erect and independent attitude, contrasted with the sallow and bilious skin of the Malay, enamelled or veneered with mahogany by marine air; his small, fierce, restless eyes, thin lips, slavish gestures and adorations. Half hidden by the ferocious-looking Malay was a little child from a neighbouring cottage, who had crept in after him, and was now in the act of reverting its head and gazing upwards at the turban and the fiery eyes beneath it, whilst with one hand he caught at the dress of the young woman for protection. My knowledge of the Oriental tongues is not remarkably extensive, being, indeed, confined to two words—the Arabic word for barley, and the Turkish for opium (madjoon), which I have learnt from Anastasius. And as I had neither a Malay dictionary nor even Adelung's Mithridates, which might have helped me to a few words, I addressed him in some lines from the Iliad, considering that, of such languages as I possessed, Greek, in point of longitude, came geographically nearest to an Oriental one. He worshipped me in a most devout manner, and replied in what I suppose was Malay. In this way I saved my reputation with my neighbours, for the Malay had no means of betraying the secret. He lay down upon the

floor for about an hour, and then pursued his journey. On his departure, I presented him with a piece of opium. To him, as an Orientalist, I concluded that opium must be familiar; and the expression of his face convinced me that it was. Nevertheless I was struck with some little consternation when I saw him suddenly raise his hand to his mouth, and (in the schoolboy phrase) bolt the whole, divided into three pieces, at one mouthful. The quantity was enough to kill three dragoons and their horses, and I felt some alarm for the poor creature; but what could be done? I had given him the opium in compassion for his solitary life, on recollecting that, if he had travelled on foot from London, it must be nearly three weeks since he could have exchanged a thought with any human being. I could not think of violating the laws of hospitality by having him surged and drenched with an emetic, and thus frightening him into a notion that we were going to sacrifice him to some English idol. No, there was clearly no help for it; he took his leave, and for some days I felt anxious; but as I never heard of any Malay being found dead, I became convinced that he was used to opium, and that I must have done him the service I designed, by giving him one night of respite from the pains of wandering.

Rest & relief



XII.

THE HERO AS MAN OF LETTERS.

§ Thomas Carlyle, 1795—1881.

[Thomas Carlyle was an English writer of great power and originality who, inspite of early discouragement, prepared to devote himself to a literary life. His first works were a *Life of Schiller* and a translation of Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister." In 1832 he published *Sartor Resartus*, perhaps the most characteristic of his works. In 1840 he delivered a course of six lectures on "Heroes, Hero-worship, and the Heroic in History," and the extract given here is from one of these Lectures. This was followed by his *History of the French Revolution*, a work which raised Carlyle to the highest pinnacle of literary reputation. Carlyle was really a prophet of spiritualism preaching in a materialistic world, and his strong personality and vigorous style had a powerful influence in arresting the tide of materialism in England. His style is marked by a ruggedness and a graphic touch which are peculiar to him.]

Hero-gods, Prophets, Poets, Priests are forms of Heroism that belong to the old ages, make their appearance in the remotest times; some of them have ceased to be possible long since, and cannot any more show themselves in this world. The Hero as *Man of Letters*, again, of which class we are to speak today, is altogether a product of these new ages; and so long as the wondrous art of *Writing*, or of Ready-writing which we call *Printing*, subsists, he may be expected to continue, as one of the main forms of Heroism for all future ages. He is, in various respects, a very singular phenomenon.

He is new, I say; he has hardly lasted above a century in the world yet. Never, till about a hundred years ago, was there seen any figure of a Great Soul living apart in that anomalous manner; endeavouring to speak-forth the inspiration that was in him by Printed Books, and find

place and subsistence by what the world would please to give him for doing that. Much had been sold and bought, and left to make its own bargain in the marketplace; but the inspired wisdom of a Heroic Soul never till then, in that naked manner. He, with his copy-rights and copy-wrongs, in his squalid garret, in his rusty coat; ruling (for this is what he does), from his grave, after death, whole nations and generations who would, or would not, give him bread while living,—is a rather curious spectacle! Few shapes of Heroism can be more unexpected.

Alas, the Hero from of old has had to cramp himself into strange shapes: the world knows not well at any time what to do with him, so foreign is his aspect in the world! It seemed absurd to us, that men, in their rude admiration, should take some wise great Odin for a god, and worship him as such; some wise great Mahomet for one god-inspired, and religiously follow his Law for twelve centuries: but that a wise great Johnson, a Burns, a Rousseau, should be taken for some idle nondescript, extant in the world to amuse idleness, and have a few coins and applauses thrown him, that he might live hereby; *this* perhaps, as before hinted, will one day seem a still absurder phasis of things!—Meanwhile, since it is the spiritual always that determines the material, this same Man-of-Letters Hero must be regarded as our most important modern person. He, such as he may be, is the soul of all. What he teaches, the whole world will do and make. The world's manner of dealing with him is the most significant feature of the world's general position. Looking well at his life, we may get a glance, as deep as is readily possible for us, into the life of those singular centuries which have produced him, in which we ourselves live and work.

There are genuine men of Letters, and not genuine; as in every kind there is a genuine and a spurious. If *Hero* be taken to mean genuine, then I say the Hero as Man of Letters will be found discharging a function for us which

is ever honourable, ever the highest; and was once well known to be the highest. He is uttering-forth, in such way as he has, the inspired soul of him; all that a man, in any case, can do. I say *inspired*; for what we call 'originality,' 'sincerity,' 'genius,' the heroic quality we have no good name for, signifies that. The Hero is he who lives in the inward sphere of things, in the True, Divine and Eternal, which exists always, unseen to most, under the Temporary, Trivial: his being is in that, he declares that abroad, by act or speech as it may be, in declaring himself abroad. His life, as we said before, is a piece of the everlasting heart of Nature herself: all men's life is,—but the weak many know not the fact, and are untrue to it, in most times; the strong few are strong, heroic, perennial, because it cannot be hidden from them. The man of Letters, like every Hero, is there to proclaim this in such sort as he can. Intrinsically it is the same function which the old generations named a man Prophet, Priest, Divinity for doing; which all manner of Heroes, by speech or by act, are sent into the world to do.

Fichte, the German Philosopher, delivered, some forty years ago at Erlangen, a highly remarkable course of Lectures on this subject: '*Ueber des Wesen des Gelehrten*,' 'On the Nature of the Literary Man.' Fichte, in conformity with the Transcendental Philosophy, of which he was a distinguished teacher, declares first: That all things which we see or work with in this Earth, especially we ourselves and all persons, are as a kind of *vesture* or sensuous Appearance: that under all there lies, as the essence of them, what he calls the 'Divine Idea of the World'; this is the Reality which 'lies at the bottom of all Appearance.' To the mass of men no such Divine Idea is recognisable in the world; they live merely, says Fichte, among the superficialities, practicalities and shows of the world, not dreaming that there is anything divine under them. But the Man of Letters is sent hither specially that he may discern for him-

self, and make manifest to us, this same Divine Idea : in every new generation it will manifest itself in a new dialect ; and he is there for the purpose of doing that. Such is Fichte's phraseology ; with which we need not quarrel. It is his way of naming what I here, by other words, am striving imperfectly to name : what there is at present no name for : the unspeakable Divine Significance, full of splendour, of wonder and terror, that lies in the being of every man, of every thing,—the Presence of the God who made every man and thing. Mahomet taught this in his dialect ; Odin in his : it is the thing which all thinking hearts, in one dialect or another, are here to teach.

Fichte calls the Man of Letters, therefore, a Prophet, or as he prefers to phrase it, a Priest continually unfolding the Godlike to men : Men of Letters are a perpetual Priesthood, from age to age, teaching all men that a God is still present in their life ; that all ' Appearance,' whatsoever we see in the world, is but as a vesture for the ' Divine Idea of the World,' for ' that which lies at the bottom of Appearance.' In the true Literary Man there is thus ever acknowledged or not by the world, a sacredness ; he is the light of the world ; the world's Priest :—guiding it, like a sacred Pillar of Fire, in its dark pilgrimage through the waste of Time. Fichte discriminates with sharp zeal the *true* Literary Man, what we here call the *Hero* as Man of Letters, from multitudes of false unheroic. Whoever lives not wholly in this Divine Idea, or living partially in it struggles not, as for the one good, to live wholly in it,—he is, let him live where else he like, in what pomps and prosperities he like, no Literary Man ; he is, says Fichte, a ' Bungler, Stumper.' Or at best, if he belong to the prosaic provinces, he may be a ' Hodman' : Fichte even calls him elsewhere a ' Nonentity,' and has in short no mercy for him, no wish that *he* should continue happy among us ! This is Fichte's notion of the Man of Letters. It means, in its own form, precisely what we here mean.

XIII
EARLY LIFE OF CLIVE.
Lord Macaulay, 1800—1859.

[Thomas Babington Macaulay was a celebrated English historian, orator, essayist and poet. After a brief political and literary career in England, he came out to India in 1834 as Law Member of the Governor-General's Council. During the last 12 years of his life, his time was almost solely occupied with the "History of England," which he could not complete, but which, even in its fragmentary form, is a masterpiece, for which he received from his publishers a cheque for £25,000. For clear brilliancy of style he is unrivalled among English writers, and his extensive reading in every department of literature, and marvellous memory were remarkable in all he wrote. He has been accused of partiality and injustice in his estimation of some famous persons—a fatal fault in an historian, which in him, was counterbalanced by the living graces of his style.]

*Subsidiary
anecdotes*
The Clives had been settled, ever since the twelfth century, on an estate of no great value, near Market Drayton, in Shropshire. In the reign of George the First, this moderate but ancient inheritance was possessed by Mr. Richard Clive who seems to have been a plain man of no great tact or capacity. He had been bred to the law, and divided his time between professional business and the avocations of a small proprietor. He married a lady from Manchester, of the name of Gaskill, and became the father of a very numerous family. His eldest son, Robert, the founder of the British empire in India, was born at the old seat of his ancestors on the twenty-ninth of September, 1725.

features
discerned Some lineaments of the character of the man were early discerned in the child. There remain letters written by his relations when he was in his seventh year; and from these letters it appears that, even at that early age, his strong will and his fiery passions, sustained by a constitutional

Brave
intrepidity which sometimes seemed hardly compatible with soundness of mind, had begun to cause great uneasiness to his family. "Fighting," says one of his uncles, "to which he is out of measure addicted, gives his temper such a fierceness and imperiousness that he flies out on every trifling occasion." The old people of the neighbourhood still remember to have heard from their parents how Bob Clive climbed to the top of the lofty steeple of Market Drayton, and with what terror the inhabitants saw him seated on a stone spout near the summit. They also relate how he formed all the idle lads of the town into a kind of predatory army, and compelled the shopkeepers to submit to a tribute of apples and halfpence, in consideration of which he guaranteed the safety of their windows. He was sent from school to school, making very little progress in his learning, and gaining for himself everywhere the character of an exceedingly naughty boy. One of his masters, it is said, was sagacious enough to prophesy that the idle lad would make a great figure in the world. But the general opinion seems to have been that poor Robert was a dunce, if not a reprobate. His family expected nothing good from such slender parts and such a headstrong temper. It is not strange, therefore, that they gladly accepted for him, when he was in his eighteenth year, a writership in the service of the East India Company, and shipped him off to make a fortune or to die of a fever at Madras. *Agreeable* *devoted* *obstinate*

Far different were the prospects of Clive from those of the youths whom the East India College now annually sends to the Presidencies of our Asiatic empire. The Company was then purely a trading corporation. Its territory consisted of a few square miles, for which rent was paid to the native governments. Its troops were scarcely numerous enough to man the batteries of three or four ill-constructed forts, which had been erected for the protection of the ware-houses. The natives, who composed a considerable part of these little

garrisons, had not yet been trained in the discipline of Europe, and were armed, some with swords and shields, some with bows and arrows. The business of the servants of the Company was not, as now, to conduct the judicial, financial, and diplomatic business of a great country, but to take stock, to make advance to weavers, to ship cargoes, and above all to keep an eye on private traders who dared to infringe the monopoly. The younger clerks were so miserably paid that they could scarcely subsist without incurring debt; the elder enriched themselves by trading on their own account; and those who lived to rise to the top of the service often accumulated considerable fortunes.

difficult & monotonous

Clive's voyage was unusually tedious even for that age. The ship remained some months at the Brazils, where the young adventurer picked up some knowledge of Portuguese and spent all his pocket-money. He did not arrive in India till more than a year after he had left England. His situation at Madras was most painful. His funds were exhausted. His pay was small. He had contracted debts. He was wretchedly lodged, no small calamity in a climate which can be made tolerable to an European only by spacious and well-placed apartments. He had been furnished with letters of recommendation to a gentleman who might have assisted him; but when he landed at Fort St. George he found that this gentleman had sailed for England. The lad's shy and haughty disposition withheld him from introducing himself to strangers. He was several months in India before he became acquainted with a single family. The climate affected his health and spirits. His duties were of a kind ill suited to his ardent and daring character. He pined for his home, and in his letters to his relations expressed his feelings in language softer and more pensive than we should have expected either from the waywardness of his boyhood, or from the inflexible sternness of his later years.

poor

"I have not enjoyed," says he, "one happy day since I left my native country"; and again, "I must confess, at intervals, when I think of my dear native England, it affects me in a very particular manner.....If I should be so far blest as to revisit again my own country, but more especially, Manchester, the centre of all my wishes, all that I could hope or desire for would be presented before me in one view."

One solace he found of the most respectable kind. The Governor possessed a good library, and permitted Clive to have access to it. The young man devoted much of his leisure to reading, and acquired at this time almost all the knowledge of books that he ever possessed. As a boy he had been too idle, as a man he soon became too busy, for literary pursuits.

But neither climate nor poverty, neither study nor the sorrows of a home-sick exile, could tame the desperate audacity of his spirit. He behaved to his official superiors as he had behaved to his schoolmasters, and was several times in danger of losing his situation. Twice, while residing in the Writers' Buildings, he attempted to destroy himself, and twice the pistol which he snapped at his own head failed to go off. This circumstance, it is said, affected him as a similar escape affected Wallenstein. After satisfying himself that the pistol was really well-loaded, he burst forth into an exclamation that surely he was reserved for something great.

About this time an event, which at first seemed likely to destroy all his hopes in life, suddenly opened before him a new path to eminence. Europe had been, during some years, distracted by the War of the Austrian Succession. George the Second was the steady ally of Maria Theresa. The house of Bourbon took the opposite side. Though England was even then the first of maritime powers, she was not, as she has since become, more than a match on the

sea for all the nations of the world together : and she found it difficult to maintain a contest against the united navies of France and Spain. In the eastern seas France obtained the ascendancy. Labourdonnais, governor of Mauritius, a man of eminent talents and virtues, conducted an expedition to the continent of India in spite of the opposition of the British fleet, landed, assembled an army, appeared before Madras, and compelled the town and fort to capitulate. The keys were delivered up ; the French colours were displayed on Fort St. George ; and the contents of the Company's ware-houses were seized as prize of war by the conquerors. It was stipulated by the capitulation that the English inhabitants should be prisoners of war on parole, and that the town should remain in the hands of the French till it should be ransomed. Labourdonnais pledged his honour that only a moderate ransom should be required.

But the success of Labourdonnais had awakened the jealousy of his countryman, Dupleix, governor of Pondicherry. Dupleix, moreover, had already begun to revolve gigantic schemes, with which the restoration of Madras to the English was by no means compatible. He declared that Labourdonnais had gone beyond his powers ; that conquests made by the French arms on the continent of India were at the disposal of the governor of Pondicherry alone ; and that Madras should be razed to the ground. Labourdonnais was compelled to yield. The anger which the breach of the capitulation excited among the English was increased by the ungenerous manner in which Dupleix treated the principal servants of the Company. The Governor and several of the first gentlemen of Fort St. George were carried under a guard to Pondicherry, and conducted through the town in a triumphal procession under the eyes of fifty thousand spectators. It was with reason thought that this gross violation of public faith absolved the inhabitants of Madras from the engagements into which they had entered with Labourdonnais. Clive

fled from the town by night in the disguise of a Mussulman, and took refuge at Fort St. David, one of the small English settlements subordinate to Madras...

The circumstances in which he was now placed naturally led him to adopt a profession better suited to his restless and intrepid spirit than the business of examining packages and casting accounts. He solicited and obtained an ensign's commission in the service of the Company, and at twenty-one entered on his military career. His personal courage, of which he had, while still a writer, given signal proof by a desperate duel with a military bully who was the terror of Fort St. David, speedily made him conspicuous even among hundreds of brave men. He soon began to show in his new calling other qualities which had not before been discerned in him, judgment, sagacity, deference to legitimate authority. He distinguished himself highly in several operations against the French, and was particularly noticed by Major Lawrence, who was then considered as the ablest British officer in India.

Clive had been only a few months in the army when intelligence arrived that peace had been concluded between Great Britain and France. Dupleix was in consequence compelled to restore Madras to the English Company; and the young ensign was at liberty to resume his former business. He did indeed return for a short time to his desk. He again quitted it in order to assist Major Lawrence in some petty hostilities with the natives, and then again returned to it. While he was thus wavering between a military and a commercial life, events took place which decided his choice. The politics of India assumed a new aspect. There was peace between the English and French Crowns; but there arose between the English and French Companies trading to the East a war most eventful and important, a war in which the prize was nothing less than the magnificent inheritance of the house of Tamerlane.

XIV

NATURE AS THE VEHICLE OF THOUGHT.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1803—1882.

[Emerson is one of the most distinguished American writers of the latter part of the 19th century. In 1840 he started a periodical called the "Dial" devoted to the discussion of prominent questions in philosophy, history, and literature. In 1849 he visited England, where he delivered a series of lectures, which were afterwards published under the title of "Representative Men." Soon after, he published "English Traits," embodying some of his observations on English manners, customs and characteristics. There is a profundity about his thoughts, a fervour in his feeling, and a loftiness in his style that set Emerson above the comprehension and appreciation of ordinary readers. But these very qualities endeared him as a "Teacher" to the hearts of those who value spirituality in life, or, as Matthew Arnold says, "as a friend and aider of those who would live in the spirit."]

Words are signs of natural facts. The use of natural history is to give us aid in supernatural history. The use of the outer creation is to give us language for the beings and changes of the inward creation. Every word which is used to express a moral or intellectual fact, if traced to its root, is found to be borrowed from some material appearance. *Right* originally means *straight*; *wrong* means *twisted*. *Spirit* primarily means *wind*; *transgression*, the crossing of a *line*; *supercilious*, the *raising of the eyebrow*. We say the *heart*, to express emotion; the *head*, to denote thought; and *thought* and *emotion* are, in their turn, words, borrowed from sensible things, and now appropriated to spiritual nature. Most of the process by which this transformation is made, is hidden from us in the remote time when language was framed; but the same tendency may be daily observed in children. Children and savages use only

nouns or names of things, which they continually convert into the verbs, and apply to analogous mental acts.

But this origin of all words that convey a spiritual import—so conspicuous a fact in the history of language—is our least debt to nature. It is not words only that are emblematic: it is things which are emblematic. Every natural fact is a symbol of some spiritual fact. Every appearance in nature corresponds to some state of the mind; and that state of the mind can only be described by presenting that natural appearance as its picture. An enraged man is a lion; a cunning man is a fox; a firm man is a rock; a learned man is a torch. A lamb is innocence; a snake is subtle spite; flowers express to us the delicate affections. Light and darkness are our familiar expressions for knowledge and ignorance; and heat for love. Visible distance, behind and before us, is respectively our image of memory and hope.

Who looks upon a river in a meditative hour, and is not reminded of the flux of all things? Throw a stone into the stream, and the circles that propagate themselves are the beautiful type of all influence. Man is conscious of an universal soul within or behind his individual life, wherein, as in a firmament, the natures of Justice, Truth, Love, Freedom, arise and shine. This universal soul he calls Reason; it is not mine, or thine, or his, but we are its: we are its property and men. And the blue sky, the sky, with its eternal calm, and full of everlasting orbs, is the type of Reason. That which intellectually considered, we call Reason, considered in relation to nature, we call Spirit. Spirit is the Creator. Spirit hath life in itself. And man, in all ages and countries, embodies it in his language as the Father.

Because of this radical correspondence between visible things and human thoughts, savages, who have only what is necessary, converse in figures. As we go back in history,

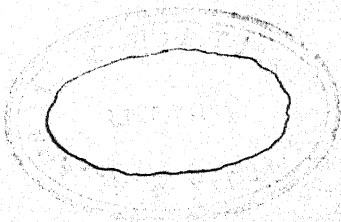
language becomes more picturesque until its infancy, when it is all poetry. It has moreover been observed, that the idioms of all languages approach each other in passages of the greatest eloquence and power. This immediate dependence of language on nature never loses power to affect us. It is this which gives that piquancy to the conversation of a strong-natured farmer or back-woodsman which all men relish.

Thus is nature an interpreter, by whose means man converses with his fellow-men. A man's power to connect his thought with its proper symbol depends upon the simplicity of his character, that is, upon his love of truth and his desire to communicate it without loss. The corruption of man is followed by the corruption of language. When simplicity of character and the sovereignty of ideas is broken up by the prevalence of secondary desires—the desire of riches, the desire of pleasure, the desire of power, the desire of praise; and duplicity and falsehood take the place of simplicity and truth, the power over nature, as an interpreter of the will, is in a degree lost; new imagery ceases to be created, and old words are perverted to stand for things which are not.

But wise men pierce this rotten diction and fasten words again to visible things: so that picturesque language is at once a commanding certificate that he who employs it, is a man in alliance with truth and God. The moment our discourse rises above the ground-line of familiar facts, and is inflamed with passion or exalted by thought, it clothes itself in images. Hence, good writing and brilliant discourse are perpetual allegories.

We are also assisted by natural objects in the expression of particular meanings. The memorable words of history, and the proverbs of nations, consisted usually of a natural fact, selected as a picture, or parable, of a moral truth.

Thus—a rolling stone gathers no moss ; a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush ; a cripple, in the right way, will beat a racer in the wrong ; make hay whilst the sun shines ; 'tis hard to carry a full cup even ; vinegar is the son of wine ; the last ounce broke the camel's back ; long-lived trees make roots first, — and the like. In their primary sense these are trivial facts, but we repeat them for the value of their analogical import.



Rathore

Pera (C. 1.)

XV

EDUCATION OF A MAN OF BUSINESS.

Sir Arthur Helps, 1813—1875.

[Arthur Helps was an English essayist and miscellaneous writer. On leaving the University he obtained a post in the Civil Service, and became Chief Secretary for Ireland, and in 1860 Clerk of the Privy Council. He was thus a busy official who devoted his leisure to the study of literature. His *Essays* are professedly written "in the intervals of business." In 1872 he was created a K. C. B. He wrote many works, but the best known are besides the *Essays* his *Friends in Council* and *Companions of my Solitude*. His essays, chiefly the first series, have clearly been written in imitation of Bacon's essays.]

Helps's style has been aptly designated as "well-bred." Every thoughtful reader will notice in it a simplicity and straightforwardness, a sweetness of tone and a certain plain and natural grace which make him such a delightful essayist.]

The essential qualities for a man of business are of a moral nature : these are to be cultivated first. He must learn betimes to love truth. The same love of truth will be found a potent charm to bear him safely through the world's entanglements—I mean safely in the most worldly sense. Besides, the love of truth not only makes a man act with more simplicity, and therefore with less chance of error; but it conduces to the highest intellectual development. The following passages in *The Statesman* gives the reason; 'The correspondences of wisdom and goodness are manifold; and that they will accompany each other is to be inferred, not only because men's wisdom makes them good, but also because their goodness makes them wise. Questions of right and wrong are a perpetual exercise of the faculties of those who are solicitous as to the right and wrong of what they do and see; and a deep interest of the heart in these ques-

tions carries with it a deeper cultivation of the understanding than can be easily effected by any other excitement to intellectual activity.'

What has just been said of the love of truth applies also to other moral qualities. Thus, charity enlightens the understanding quite as much as it purifies the heart. And indeed knowledge is not more girt about with power than goodness is with wisdom.

The next thing in the training of one who is to become a man of business will be for him to form principles; for without these, when thrown on the sea of action, he will be without rudder and compass. They are the best results of study. Whether it is history, or political economy, or ethics, that he is studying, these principles are to be the reward of his labour. A principle resembles a law in the physical world; though it can seldom have the same certainty, as the facts which it has to explain and embrace do not admit of being weighed or numbered with the same exactness as material things. The principles which our student adopts at first may be unsound, may be insufficient, but he must not neglect to form some: and must only nourish a love of truth that will not allow him to hold to any, the moment that he finds them to be erroneous.

Much depends upon the temperament of a man of business. It should be hopeful, that it may bear him up against the faintheartedness, the folly, the falsehood, and the numberless discouragements which even a prosperous man will have to endure. It should also be calm; for else he may be driven wild by any great pressure of business, and lose his time, and his head, in rushing from one unfinished thing, to begin something else. Now this wished-for conjunction of the calm and the hopeful is very rare. It is, however, in every man's power to study well his own temperament, and to provide against the defects in it.

A habit of thinking for himself is one which may be acquired by the solitary student. But the habit of deciding for himself, so indispensable to a man of business, is not to be gained by study. Decision is a thing that cannot be fully exercised until it is actually wanted. You cannot play at deciding. You must have realities to deal with.

It is true that the formation of principles which has been spoken of before, requires decision; but it is of that kind which depends upon deliberate judgment: whereas the decision which is wanted in the world's business must ever be within call, and does not judge so much as it foresees and chooses. This kind of decision is to be found in those who have been thrown early on their own resources, or who have been brought up in great freedom.

It would be difficult to lay down any course of study not technical, that would be peculiarly fitted to form a man of business. He should be brought up in the habit of reasoning closely: and to ensure this, there is hardly anything better for him than the study of geometry.

In any course of study to be laid down for him something like universality should be aimed at, which not only makes the mind agile, but gives variety of information. Such a system will make him acquainted with many modes of thought, with various classes of facts, and will enable him to understand men better.

There will be a time in his youth which may, perhaps, be well spent in those studies which are of a metaphysical nature. In the investigation of some of the great questions of philosophy, a breadth and a tone may be given to a man's mode of thinking, which will afterwards be of signal use to him in the business of everyday life.

We cannot enter here into a description of the technical studies for a man of business; but I may point out that there are works which soften the transition from the schools to the world, and which are particularly needed in a system

of education, like our own, consisting of studies for the most part remote from real life. These works are such as tend to give the student that interest in the common things about him which he has scarcely ever been called upon to feel. They show how imagination and philosophy can be woven into practical wisdom. Such are the writings of Bacon. His lucid order, his grasp of the subject, the comprehensiveness of his views, his knowledge of mankind—the greatest perhaps that has ever been distinctly given out by any uninspired man—the practical nature of his purposes, and his respect for anything of human interest render Bacon's works unrivalled in their fitness to form the best men for the conduct of the highest affairs.

It is not, however, so much the thing studied, as the manner of studying it. Our student is not intended to become a learned man, but a man of business; not 'a full man,' but a 'ready man.' He must be taught to arrange and express what he knows. For this purpose let him employ himself in making digests, arranging and classifying materials, writing narratives, and in deciding upon conflicting evidence. All these exercises require method. He must expect that his early attempts will be clumsy; he begins, perhaps, by dividing his subject in any way that occurs to him, with no other view than that of treating separate portions of it separately: he does not perceive, at first, what things are of one kind, and what of another, and what should be the logical order of their following. But from such rude beginnings method is developed; and there is hardly any degree of toil for which he would not be compensated by such a result. He will have a sure reward in the clearness of his own views, and in the facility of explaining them to others. People bring their attention to the man who gives them most profit for it; and this will be one who is a master of method.

Our student should begin soon to cultivate a fluency in writing—I do not mean a flow of words, but a habit of

expressing his thoughts with accuracy, with brevity, and with readiness, which can only be acquired by practice early in life. You find persons who, from neglect in this part of their education, can express themselves briefly and accurately, but only after much care and labour. And again, you meet with others who cannot express themselves accurately, although they have method in their thoughts, and can write with readiness; but they have not been accustomed to look at the precise meaning of words: and such people are apt to fall into the common error of indulging in a great many words, as if it were from a sort of hope that some of them might be to the purpose.

In the style of a man of business nothing is to be aimed at but plainness and precision. For instance, a close repetition of the same word for the same thing need not be avoided. The aversion to such repetitions may be carried too far in all kinds of writing. In literature, however, you are seldom brought to account for misleading people; but in business you may soon be called upon to pay the penalty for having shunned the word which would exactly have expressed your meaning.

I cannot conclude this essay better than by endeavouring to describe what sort of person a consummate man of business should be.

He should be able to fix his attention on details, and be ready to give every kind of argument a hearing. This will not encumber him, for he must have been practised beforehand in the exercise of his intellect, and be strong in principles. One man collects materials together, and there they remain, a shapeless heap; another, possessed of method, can arrange what he has collected; but such a man as I would describe, by the aid of principles, goes farther, and builds with his materials.

He should be courageous. The courage, however, required in civil affairs is that which belongs rather to the

able commander than the mere soldier. But any kind of courage is serviceable.

Besides a stout heart, he should have a patient temperament, and a vigorous but disciplined imagination ; and then he will plan boldly, and with large extent of view, execute calmly, and not be stretching out his hand for things not yet within his grasp. He will let opportunities grow before his eyes, until they are ripe to be seized. He will think steadily over possible failure, in order to provide a remedy or a retreat. There will be the strength of repose about him.

He must have a deep sense of responsibility. He must believe in the power and vitality of truth, and in all he does or says, should be anxious to express as much truth as possible.

His feeling of responsibility and love of truth will almost inevitably endow him with diligence, accuracy, and discreteness,—those commonplace requisites for a good man of business, without which all the rest may never come to be ' translated into action.'

XVI.

RECIPROCAL DUTIES OF STATE AND SUBJECT.

James Anthony Froude, 1818—1894.

[Froude was an English essayist and historian, famous as the author of a *History of England from the fall of Wolsey to the Defeat of the Spanish Armada*, which was published in 12 volumes between 1856 and 1870. The work displays remarkable research and possesses a vividness of style which is peculiarly his. He also wrote a life of Carlyle. From 1892 to 1894 he was Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford.

As an essayist he is represented by four volumes of chiefly historical essays, entitled *Short Studies on Great Subjects*, from the second volume of which the present extract is taken.]

I regard the present constitution of government in this country, not as the result of deliberate and wise foresight, not as an elaborate machine shaped into perfection by the successive efforts of political sagacity, but as a condition of things arising from causes historically traceable, very far removed from perfection, made possible only by peculiar external circumstances and no less inevitably transient. The House of Commons broke the power of the Crown. The House of Commons itself is composed of heterogeneous elements which, by degrees, have arranged themselves into two great sections,—the established families, and those who aspire to be established, the country party and the town party, the agricultural party and the commercial party, with other lines of division parallel to these, and nearly coincident with them, the party of the past and the party of the future, those who believe in established usage and those who believe in change and progress, opposing sentiments combined with opposing interests. The full development of these tendencies was long interfered with by tradition and inherited associations. The English, like all great nations, are instinctively conservative and

fear of change and novelty has been a drag upon the wheel. It is only since the masses were called to a share of the franchise, in the first Reform Bill, that the balance has been established in completeness, which is called government by party, and the responsibility of the virtual head of the State to the House of Commons, and the House of Commons alone. Like many other phenomena which have had their day in this world, it is attended by a philosophy which extols it as the most finished form of political organization. The result of it is the paralysis of authority, the limitation of statesmanship to the immediate necessities of the hour, and the surrounding the Prime Minister with so many intricacies of situation that he lives in a straitwaistcoat, with handcuffs on his wrists and fetters on his ankles. Were he a Moses or a Lycurgus he can do nothing without a majority at his back—a majority composed of men who are sent to Parliament, not for their ability, not for their patriotism or their probity, but because they can be relied on to defend the interest which they are elected to represent. The minister's first and last care is to avoid offending these persons. He must leave abuses untouched which he would not spare for an hour could he have his way, because this and that member of his party is interested in maintaining them. Every avenue of practical administration is obstructed. To get the slightest thing effectually done is made so difficult that any excuse is caught at for leaving it undone. The art of a statesman becomes the art of 'how not to do it,' and there is no wonder that, harassed and tormented, he listens greedily to and learns himself to repeat the phrases of the prevailing theory, and has but one answer to every petition, that those who wish anything to be done must do it for themselves. Drunkenness cannot be checked, because it is dangerous to offend the brewers and the pot-house-keepers, who have so large influence in the elections; and those who are scandalized at the wreck and ruin which the drink trade is causing are treated to a

lesson on moral self-restraint. Bakers who adulterate their bread must not be exposed and punished. The bakers, at the next dissolution, will vote as a class for the opposition candidate. In the same way all patronage, all offices of which Governments have to dispose, all honours which they have to distribute, are similarly sacrificed to party, to rigging votes and wire-pulling majorities. The competitive examination system has been established in the lower branches of the public service, not as a thing good in itself—we shall believe that it is good in itself when merchants and bankers let the board of examiners choose their clerks for them—but as an expedient to rescue some parts of the service from jobbery, and to save ministers from the necessity of offending their supporters, by refusing requests which they could not in ordinary honesty grant. The establishment of the system is only a confession that the possessors of patronage can no longer exercise it conscientiously, while the popular voice sings its praises as a triumph of probity and sagacity. The fact and the theory are made to harmonize. Government is inefficient. It changes so frequently that a minister is superseded before he comes to understand his work. He can lay down no principles, for they are liable to be immediately reversed; but the object is that he should do nothing, and therefore it is well he should be able to do nothing. A colonial policy is impossible, not because intelligent people do not believe that a closer union with the colonies is not in itself desirable, but because influential capitalists are interested in keeping down the labour market, and they know that such a union would be accompanied with a large and sustained emigration.

Among the infinite resultants from such a condition of things one of the most obvious is the enormous waste of ability. It is tragical to think of such a mind as Mr. Gladstone's being occupied incessantly with petty thoughts

of how he can keep his party together. He must fawn and flatter, and make himself common upon platforms, and give honour where honour is not due, and withhold it where he knows it ought to be bestowed. He stands in the front rank of the nation ; its seeming idol, yet the servant of those who clamour that he is the greatest living man ; yet little less helpless than the meanest of them to do what he knows that their welfare demands, and forced, when called on, to find reasons why such things are better left undone. He is bringing in measures for the improved government of Ireland. He is obliged to say that he expects good from them ; yet every one who understands Ireland is aware that there is but one possible end to the chronic disease of that unhappy country, without which if an angel brought a land law for it from heaven, the symptoms would continue unabated ; and that is a just, impartial, and *stable* administration. So long as parties go in and out and Governments live by majorities of votes, the Tory, when he is in, will court the Protestant landowner, and the Liberal, who wishes to oust him, will fawn on the Catholic priest, and the wretched peasantry will be fevered with exciting promises and fed on hopes which must be for ever disappointed.

When Lord Derby came last into office, and it was rumoured that the ground was to be cut from under Mr. Gladstone's feet by the introduction of a Reform Bill, I asked some one—I must not indicate him more closely—why the Tories did not keep to their own peculiar province. Authority was everywhere falling to pieces ; why did not they say frankly they would try to check, for instance, the dishonesty of trade, and that if the people wanted reform bills they must go to those who believed that reform would do them good ? My friend said that they would be immediately thrown out. I agreed ; but I said they would return in a year or two, with every right-minded Englishman at their backs. My friend was being educated. He

said it would never do. The Tories had been long out of power, and they wanted patronage. There were House of Commons supporters to be made peers, barristers to be made judges, parsons to be made deans and bishops, hungry hangers-on to be provided for, or their services could not be counted on for the future. *They must blood the noses of their hounds.*

It was enough. The system of party government had demoralized both sections of the ruling classes with equal completeness. It was and is idle to hope that any good can come to us as a nation while our affairs are managed on the principle of blooding the hounds' noses, though it be construed by all the newspapers in England into the development of constitutional liberty.

Constitutions are made for the country, and not the country for constitutions. Lord Bacon imagined that knowledge could be so formularized as to become mechanical, and that the inequalities of natural ability would be levelled or neutralized. No symptoms of such a change are as yet visible. The man of genius retains his supremacy in science. The intellect of a Stephenson or a Faraday remains a ruling power, which the world obeys and prospers in obeying. As little has society arrived, or can arrive, at a stage when the wisdom of the statesman is no longer needed for control and governance, where the sage and the blockhead, the knave and the honest man, can be trusted to rub on together with equal rights and equal liberties. In human things, as in all else, there is a right way in opposition to a wrong way, which only wisdom can discover, yet in the choice of which or the rejection of which, success or failure depends; and the *laissez-j'aire* philosophy is but a phase of opinion, a flattering interpretation of transient political phenomena, which could not survive a single spasm of severe national trial, which would vanish into air before a protracted war, or even before a

chronic decay of trade, which might bring on us here in England a repetition of the Irish famine.

The heart of the nation, however, is still sound as ever. The popular political theories are but as a scum upon its surface, plausible formulas adapted to an accidental state of things, which are passed from mouth to mouth by multitudes who have never yet had occasion to think seriously, but which lie merely upon the lips, and have never penetrated and never will penetrate into the hearts of such a people as the English. The English are an order-loving people, who detest anarchy in whatever shining dress it may present itself. They have power at last in their hands. They must learn to make a wise use of it, and discover means by which it can be made available to their real good, by giving permanence and stability to authority. It is admitted on all sides that the two parties which divide the country represent each a form of thought which is the complement of the other. Her Majesty's Government is incomplete without her Majesty's Opposition. It may be difficult, but it cannot be impossible, to unite the energies which are now exhausted in neutralizing one another, and make available such political intelligence as we possess for some more wholesome and enduring administration. The great interests of the Empire must not and cannot remain at the mercy of parliamentary intrigues, or the transient gusts of popular opinion. It is true that there can be no such thing any more as fixity of tenure in high office. That arrangement the world has outgrown. But without fixity of tenure, without sacrifice of eventual responsibility, there might be a longer and more secure lease of power under which a far-sighted statesmanship might become again possible, and ministers might use their opportunities and their ability in the true interests of the country without fear of being driven from their places by the passing gusts of interested or ignorant impatience.

XVII.

THE SKY.

John Ruskin, 1819—1900.

[Ruskin had an inherited taste for art, and his first work, *Modern Painters*, in six volumes, was published anonymously "by a Graduate of Oxford" between 1843 and 1860. In 1860 he turned the current of his writings towards social subjects. His famous book *Unto this Last*, is an attack on the current theories of political economy. During the latter half of his career, Ruskin was one of the greatest influences on modern thought. All his writings are marked by the eloquence of passionate earnestness, and rarely could he write in the quiet style of the present essay, which is not at all typical of Ruskin's style.]

It is a strange thing how little in general people know about the sky. It is the part of creation in which Nature has done more for the sake of pleasing man, more for the sole and evident purpose of talking to him and teaching him, than in any other of her works, and it is just the part in which we least attend to her. There are not many of her other works in which some more essential purpose than the mere pleasing of man is not answered by every part of their organisation; but every essential purpose of the sky might, so far as we know, be answered, if once in three days, or thereabouts, a great, ugly, black rain-cloud were brought up over the blue, and everything well watered, and so all left blue again till next time, with perhaps a film of morning and evening mist for dew.

And instead of this, there is not a moment of any day of our lives, when nature is not producing scene after scene, picture after picture, glory after glory, and working still upon such exquisite and constant principles of the most perfect beauty, that it is quite certain it is all done for us,

and intended for our perpetual pleasure. And every man, wherever placed, however far from other sources of interest or of beauty, has this doing for him constantly. The noblest scenes of the earth can be seen and known but by few; it is not intended that man should live always in the midst of them; he injures them by his presence, he ceases to feel them if he be always with them: but the sky is for all; bright as it is, it is not

Too bright, nor good,
For human nature's daily food;

it is fitted for the perpetual comfort and exalting of the heart, for the soothing it and purifying it from its dross and dust.

And yet we never attend to it, we never make it a subject of thought, but as it has to do with our animal sensations; we look upon all by which it speaks to us more clearly than to brutes, upon all which bears witness to the intention of the Supreme that we are to receive more from the converging vault than the light and the dew which we share with the weed and the worm, only as a succession of meaningless accidents too common to be worthy of a moment of watchfulness, or a glance of admiration.

If in our moments of utter idleness, we turn to the sky as a last resource, which of its phenomena do we speak of? One says, it has been wet; and another, it has been windy; and another, it has been warm. Who, among the whole chattering crowd, can tell me of the forms and the precipices, of the chain of tall white mountains that girded the horizon at noon yesterday? Who saw the narrow sunbeam that came out of the south, and smote upon their summits until they melted away in a dust of blue rain? Who saw the dance of the dead clouds when the sunlight left them last night, and the west wind blew them before it like withered leaves?

All has passed, unseen ; or if the apathy be ever shaken off, even for an instant, it is only by what is gross, or what is extraordinary ; and yet it is not in the clash of the hail, nor the drift of the whirlwind, that the highest characters of the sublime are developed. God is not in the earthquake, nor in the fire ; but in the still, small voice. It is in quiet passages of majesty, the deep, and the calm, and the perpetual ; that which must be sought ere it is seen, and loved ere it is understood ; things which the angels work out for us daily, and yet vary eternally ; which are never wanting and never repeated ; which are to be found always yet each found but once ; it is through these that the lesson of devotion is chiefly taught, and the blessing of beauty given.

Stand upon the peak of some isolated mountain at day-break, when the night mists first rise from off the plains, and watch their white and lakelike fields, as they float in level bays and winding gulfs about the summits of the lower hills, untouched yet by more than dawn, colder and more quiet than a windless sea under the moon of midnight ; watch when the first sunbeam is sent upon the silver channels, how the foam parts and passes away, and down under their depths the glittering city and green pasture lie between the white paths of winding rivers ; the flakes of light falling every moment faster and broader among the starry spires, as the wreathed surges break and vanish above them, and the confused crests and ridges of the dark hills shorten their gray shadows upon the plain.

Wait a little longer, and you shall see those scattered mists floating up towards you, along the winding valleys, till they couch in quiet masses, upon the broad breasts of the higher hills, whose leagues of massy undulation will melt back and back into that robe of material light, until they fade away, lost in its lustre, to appear again above, in the serene heaven, like a wild, bright, impossible dream.

Wait yet a little longer, and you shall see those mists gather themselves into white towers, and stand like fortresses along the promontories, massy and motionless, only piled with every instant higher and higher into the sky, and casting longer shadows athwart the rocks; and out of the pale blue of the horizon you will see forming and advancing a troop of narrow, dark, pointed vapours, which will cover the sky, inch by inch, with their gray network, and take the light off the landscape with an eclipse which will stop the singing of the birds and the motion of the leaves, together.

And then you will hear the sudden rush of the awakened wind, and you will see those watch towers of vapour swept away from their foundations, and waving curtains of opaque rain let down to the valleys. And then, as the sun sinks, you shall see the storm drift for an instant from off the hills, leaving their broad sides smoking and loaded yet with snow-white, torn, steamlike rags of vapour, now gone, now gathered again; while the smouldering sun, seeming not far away, but burning like a red-hot ball beside you, and as if you could reach it, plunges through the rushing wind and rolling cloud with headlong fall, as if it meant to rise no more, dyeing all the air about it with blood.

And then you shall hear the fainting tempest die in the hollow of the night, and you shall see a green halo kindling on the summit of the eastern hills, brighter—brighter yet, till the large, white circle of the slow moon is lifted up among the clouds, step by step, line by line; star after star she quenches with her kindling light, setting in their stead an army of pale, fleecy wreaths in the heaven, to give light upon the earth, which move together, hand in hand, so measured in their unity of motion, that the whole heaven seems to roll with them, and the earth to reel under them.

And then wait yet for one hour, until the east again becomes purple, and the heaving mountains rolling against

it in darkness, like waves of a wild sea, are drowned one by one in the glory of its burning : watch the white glaciers blaze in their winding paths about the mountains, like mighty serpents with scales of fire : watch the peaks of solitary snow, kindling downwards, chasm by chasm, each in itself a new morning ; and then, when you look no more for gladness, and when you are bowed down with fear and love of the Maker and Doer of this, tell me who has best delivered this His message unto men !

XVIII.

THE HAPPINESS OF DUTY.

Lord Avebury, 1834—1913.

[Lord Avebury, better known as Sir John Lubbock, was a banker. In 1865 he succeeded to the baronetcy, and was M. P. from 1870 onwards. In 1900 he was raised to the peerage. His business and political life left him leisure for the pursuit of science and literature. He has written a number of books on flowers and insects and was interested in plant and animal life from the evolutionist's point of view. His didactic works, such as the *Pleasures of Life*, the *Use of Life*, and the *Beauties of Nature*, were and are still extremely popular. The present essay is adapted from his *Pleasures of Life*. Lord Avebury also published "a list of the best hundred books of the world," which became very famous at one time.]

We ought not to picture Duty to ourselves, or to others, as a stern taskmistress. She is rather a kind and sympathetic mother, ever ready to shelter us from the cares and anxieties of this world, and to guide us in the paths of peace.

To shut oneself up from mankind is, in most cases, to lead a dull as well as selfish life. Our duty is to make ourselves useful, and thus life may be made most interesting, while yet comparatively free from anxiety.

But how can we fill our lives with *life*, energy, and interest, and yet keep care outside?

Many great men have made shipwreck in the attempt. "Antony sought for happiness in love; Brutus in glory; Cæsar dominion: the first found disgrace, the second disgust, the last ingratitude, and each destruction." Riches, again, often bring danger, trouble, and temptation; they require care to keep, though they may give much happiness if wisely spent.

How then is this great object to be secured? "What," says Marcus Aurelius, "What is that which is able to conduct man? One thing and only one—philosophy. But this consists in keeping the spirit within a man free from violence and unharmed, superior to pains and pleasures, doing nothing without a purpose, yet not falsely and with hypocrisy, not feeling the need of another man's doing or not doing anything; and besides, accepting all that happens, and all that is allotted, as coming from thence, wherever it is, from whence he himself came; and, finally, waiting for death with a cheerful mind, as being nothing else than a dissolution of the elements of which every living being is compounded." I confess I do not feel the force of these last few words, which indeed scarcely seem requisite for his argument. The thought for death, however, certainly influences the conduct of life less than might have been expected.

Bacon truly points out that 'there is no passion in the mind of man so weak, but it mates and masters the fear of death.... Revenge triumphs over death, love slights it, honour aspireth to it, grief flieth to it.'

We need certainly have no such fear if we have done our best to make others good and happy; to promote "peace on earth and good will amongst men." Nothing, again, can do more to release us from the cares of this world, which consume so much of our time, and embitter so much of our life. When we have done our best, we should wait the result in peace: content, as Epictetus says, "with that which happens, for what God chooses is better than what I choose."

At any rate, if we have not effected all we wished, we shall have influenced ourselves. It may be true that one cannot do much. "You are not Hercules, and you are not able to purge away the wickedness of others; nor yet are you Theseus, able to drive away the evil things of Attica.

But you may clear away your own. From yourself, from your own thoughts, cast away sadness, fear, desire, envy, malevolence, avarice, effeminacy, intemperance. But it is not possible to eject these things otherwise than by looking to God only, by fixing your affections on Him only, by being consecrated by His commands."

Duty does not imply restraint. People sometimes think how delightful it would be to be quite free. But a fish, as Ruskin says, is freer than a man, and as for a fly, it is "a black incarnation of freedom." A life of so-called pleasure and self-indulgence is not a life of real happiness or true freedom. Far from it, if we once begin to give way to ourselves, we fall under a most intolerable tyranny. Other temptations are in some respects like that of drink. At first, perhaps, it seems delightful, but there is bitterness at the bottom of the cup. Men drink to satisfy the desire created by previous indulgence. So it is in other things. Repetition soon becomes a craving, not a pleasure. Resistance grows more and more painful; yielding, which at first, perhaps, afforded some slight and temporary gratification, soon ceases to give pleasure, and even if for a time it procures relief, ere long becomes odious itself.

To resist is difficult, to give way is painful; until at length the wretched victim to himself, can only purchase, or thinks he can only purchase, temporary relief from intolerable craving and depression, at the expense of even greater suffering in the future.

On the other hand, self-control, however difficult at first, becomes step by step easier and more delightful. We possess mysteriously a sort of dual nature, and there are few truer triumphs, or more delightful sensations, than to obtain thorough command of oneself.

How much pleasanter it is to ride a spirited horse, even perhaps though requiring some strength and skill, than to

creep along upon a jaded hack. In the one case you feel under you the free, responsive spring of a living and willing force ; in the other you have to spur a dull and lifeless slave.

To rule oneself is in reality the greatest triumph. "He who is his own monarch," says Sir T. Browne, "contentedly sways the sceptre of himself, not envying the glory to crowned heads ;" for those are really highest who are nearest to heaven, and those are lowest who are farthest from it.

True greatness has little, if anything, to do with rank or power. We are told that Cineas the philosopher once asked Pyrrhus what he would do when he had conquered Italy. "I will conquer Sicily." "And after Sicily?" "Then Africa." "And after you have conquered the world?" "I will take my ease and be merry." "Then," asked Cineas, "why can you not take your ease and be merry now?"

Moreover, as Sir Arthur Helps has wisely pointed out, "the enlarged view we have of the Universe must in some measure damp personal ambition. What is it to be king or emperor over a 'bit of a bit' of this little earth" "All rising to great place," says Bacon, "is by a winding stair ;" and "princes are like heavenly bodies, which have much veneration, but no rest."

Plato in the *Republic* mentions an old myth that after death every soul has to choose a lot in life for the existence in the next world ; and he tells us that the wise Ulysses searched for a considerable time for the lot of a private man. He had some difficulty in finding it, as it was lying neglected in a corner, but when he had secured it he was delighted ; the recollection of all he had gone through on earth having disenchanted him of ambition.

Moreover, there is a great deal of drudgery in the lives of courts. Ceremonials may be important, but they take up much time and are terribly tedious.

A man then is his own best kingdom. "He that ruleth his spirit," says Solomon, "is better than he that taketh a city." But self-control, this truest and greatest monarchy, rarely comes by inheritance. Every one of us must conquer himself; and we may do so, if we take conscience for our guide and general.

Being myself engaged in business, I was rather startled to find it laid down by no less an authority than Aristotle (almost as if it were a self-evident proposition) that commerce "is incompatible with that dignified life which it is to be wished that our citizens should lead, and totally adverse to that generous elevation of mind with which it is our ambition to inspire them." I know not how far that may really have been the spirit and tendency of commerce among the ancient Greeks; but if so, I do not wonder that it was more successful.

It is not true that the ordinary duties of life in a country like ours—agriculture, manufactures and commerce,—the pursuits to which the vast majority are and must be devoted—are incompatible with the dignity or nobility of life. Whether a life is noble or ignoble depends, not on the calling which is adopted, but on the spirit in which it is followed. The humblest life may be noble, while that of the most powerful monarch or the greatest genius may be contemptible. Commerce, indeed, is not only compatible, but I would almost go further and say that it will be most successful, if carried on in happy union with noble aims and generous aspirations.

There are many who seem to think that we have fallen on an age in the world when life is especially difficult and anxious, when there is less leisure than of yore, and the struggle for existence is keener than ever.

On the other hand, we must remember how much we have gained in security? It may be an age of hard work, but when this is not carried to an extreme, it is by no means an evil. If we have less leisure, one reason is because life is so full of interest. Cheerfulness is the daughter of employment, and I believe there never was a time when thought was freer, or when modest merit and patient industry were more sure of reward.

We must not, indeed, be discouraged if success be slow in coming, nor puffed up if it comes quickly. We often complain of the nature of things when the fault is all in ourselves. Seneca, in one of his letters, mentions that his wife's maid, Harpaste, had nearly lost her eyesight, but 'she knoweth not she is blind, she saith the house is dark. This that seemeth ridiculous unto us in her happeneth unto us all. No man understandeth that he is covetous, or avaricious. He saith, I am not ambitious, but no man can otherwise live in Rome; I am not sumptuous, but the city requireth great expense.'

Newman, in perhaps the most beautiful of his hymns, 'Lead, kindly light,' says:

But we must be sure that we are really following some trustworthy guide, and not out of mere laziness allowing ourselves to drift. We have a guide within us which will generally lead us straight enough.

Religion, no doubt, is full of difficulties, but if we are often puzzled what to think, we need seldom be in doubt what to do.

If we are ever in doubt what to do, it is a good rule to ask ourselves what we shall wish on the morrow that we had done.

Moreover, the result in the long run will depend not so much on some single resolution, or on our action in a special case, but rather on the preparation of daily life. Battles

are often won before they are fought. To control our passions we must govern our habits, and keep watch over ourselves in the small details of everyday life.

The importance of small things has been pointed out by philosophers over and over again from Æsop downwards. "Great without small makes a bad wall," says a quaint Greek proverb, which seems to go back to cyclopean times. In an old Hindoo story Ammi says to his son, "Bring me a fruit of that tree and break it open. What is there?" The son said, "Some small seeds." "Break one of them and what do you see?" "Nothing, my lord." "My child," said Ammi, "where you see nothing there dwells a mighty tree". It may almost be questioned whether anything can be truly called small.

We should therefore watch ourselves in small things. If you wish not to be of an angry temper, do not feed the habit, throw nothing on it which will increase it : at first keep quiet, and count the days on which you have not been angry. I used to be in a passion every day ; now every second day ; then every third ; then every fourth. But if you have intermitted thirty days, make a sacrifice to God. For the habit at first begins to be weakened, and then is completely destroyed. When you can say, ' I have not been vexed to-day, nor the day before, nor yet on any succeeding day during two or three months ; but I took care when some exciting things happened,' be assured that you are in a good way."

Happy indeed is he who has a sanctuary in his own soul. "He who is virtuous is wise ; and he who is wise is good ; and he who is good is happy."

But we cannot expect to be happy if we do not lead pure and useful lives. To be good company for ourselves we must store our minds well ; fill them with pure and peaceful thoughts ; with pleasant memories of the past, and reasonable hopes for the future. We must, as far as may be,

protect ourselves from self-reproach, from care, and from anxiety. We shall make our lives pure and peaceful, by resisting evil, by placing restraint upon our appetites, and perhaps even more by strengthening and developing our tendencies to good. We must be careful, then, on what we allow our minds to dwell. The soul is dyed by its thoughts; we cannot keep our minds pure if we allow them to be sullied by detailed accounts of crime and sin.

XIX. THE STUDY OF LITERATURE.

Lord Morley, 1838—1924.

[Lord Morley is a famous English author and politician. His later political career, as Chief Secretary for Ireland, Secretary of State of India, &c., has cast his more brilliant literary career of earlier years into the shade. He is the author of numerous works, the most famous of which are *Voltaire*, *Rousseau*, *On Compromise*, *Critical Miscellanies* and *Studies in Literature*.]

What is literature ? It has often been defined. Emerson says it is a record of the best thoughts. "By literature," says another author, I think Mr. Stopford Brooke, "we mean the written thoughts and feelings of intelligent men and women arranged in a way that shall give pleasure to the reader." A third account is that "the aim of a student of literature is to know the best that has been thought in the world." Definitions always appear to me in these things to be in the nature of vanity. I feel that the attempt to be compact in the definition of literature ends in something that is rather meagre, partial, starved, and unsatisfactory. I turn to the answer given by a great French writer to a question not quite the same, *viz.*, "What is a classic ?" Literature consists of a whole body of classics in the true sense of the word, and a classic, as Sainte Beuve defines him, is an "author who has enriched the human mind, who has really added to its treasure, who has got it to take a step farther ; who has discovered some unequivocal moral truth, or penetrated to some eternal passion, in that heart of man where it seemed as though all were known and explored ; who has produced his thought, or his observation, or his invention, under some form, no matter what, so it be great, large, acute, and

reasonable, sane and beautiful in itself ; who has spoken to all in a style of his own, yet a style which finds itself the style of everybody,—in a style that is at once new and antique, and is the contemporary of all the sages." At a single hearing you may not take all that in ; but if you should have any opportunity of recurring to it you will find this a satisfactory, full, and instructive account of what is a classic, and will find in it a full and satisfactory account of what those who have thought most on literature hope to get from it and most would desire to confer upon others by it. Literature consists of all the books—and they are not so many—where moral truth and human passion are touched with a certain largeness, sanity, and attraction of form. My notion of the literary student is one who through books explores the strange voyages of man's moral reason, the impulses of the human heart, the chances and changes that have overtaken human ideals of virtue and happiness, of conduct and manners, and the shifting fortunes of great conceptions of truth and virtue. Poets, dramatists, humorists, satirists, masters of fiction, the great preachers, the character-writers, the maxim-writers, the great political orators—they are all literature in so far as they teach us to know man and to know human nature. This is what makes literature, rightly sifted and selected and rightly studied, not the mere elegant trifling that it is so often and so erroneously supposed to be, but a proper instrument for a systematic training of the imagination and sympathies, and of a genial and varied moral sensibility.

From this point of view let me remind you that books are not the products of accident and caprice. As Goethe said, if you would understand an author, you must understand his age. The same thing is just as true of a book. If you would comprehend it, you must know the age. There is an order ; there are causes and relations. There are relations between great compositions and the societies from

which they have emerged. I would put it in this way to you, that just as the naturalist strives to understand and to explain the distribution of plants and animals over the surface of the globe, to connect their presence or their absence with the great geological, climatic, and oceanic changes, so the student of literature, if he be wise, undertakes an ordered and connected survey of ideas, of tastes, of sentiments, of imagination, of humour, of invention, as they affect and as they are affected by the ever-changing experiences of human nature, and the manifold variations that time and circumstances are incessantly working in human society.

It is because I am possessed, and desire to see others possessed, by that conception of literary study, that I watch with the greatest sympathy and admiration the efforts of those who are striving so hard, and, I hope, so successfully, to bring the systematic and methodical study of our own literature, in connection with other literatures, among subjects for teaching and examination in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. I regard those efforts with the liveliest interest and sympathy. Everybody agrees that an educated man ought to have a general notion of the course of the great outward events of European history. So, too, an educated man ought to have a general notion of the course of all those inward thoughts and moods which find their expression in literature. I think that in cultivating the study of literature, as I have rather laboriously endeavoured to define it, you will be cultivating the most important side of history. Knowledge of it gives stability and substance to character. It furnishes a view of the ground we stand on. It builds up a solid backing of precedent and experience. It teaches us where we are. It protects us against imposture and surprise.

Before closing I should like to say one word upon the practice of composition. I have suffered, by the chance of life, very much from the practice of composition. It has

been my lot, I suppose, to read more unpublished work than any one else in this room, and, I hope, in this city. There is an idea, and I venture to think, a very mistaken idea, that you cannot have a taste for literature unless you are yourself an author. I make bold entirely to demur to that proposition. It is practically most mischievous, and leads scores and even hundreds of people to waste their time in the most unprofitable manner that the wit of man can devise, on work in which they can no more achieve even the most moderate excellence than they can compose a Ninth Symphony or paint a Transfiguration. It is a terrible error to suppose that because you relish "Wordsworth's solemn-thoughted idyll, or Tennyson's enchanted reverie," therefore you have a call to run off to write bad verse at the Lakes or the Isle of Wight. I beseech you not all to turn to authorship. I will go further. I venture, with all respect to those who are teachers of literature, to doubt the excellence and utility of the practice of overmuch essay-writing and composition. I have very little faith in rules of style, though I have an unbounded faith in the virtue of cultivating direct and precise expression. But you must carry on the operation inside the mind, and not merely by practising literary deportment on paper. It is not everybody who can command the mighty rhythm of the greatest masters of human speech. But every one can make reasonably sure that he knows what he means, and whether he has found the right word. These are internal operations, and are not forwarded by writing for writing's sake. I am strong for attention to expression, if that attention be exercised in the right way. It has been said a million times that the foundation of right expression in speech or writing is sincerity. It is as true now as it has ever been. Right expression is a part of character. As some body has said, by learning to speak with precision, you learn to think with correctness; and the way to firm and vigorous speech lies through the cultivation of high and

noble sentiments. I think, as far as my observation has gone, that men will do better if they seek precision by studying carefully and with an open mind and a vigilant eye the great models of writing, than by excessive practice of writing on their own account.

Much might here be said on what is one of the most important of all the sides of literary study. I mean its effect as helping to preserve the dignity and the purity of the English language. That noble instrument has never been exposed to such dangers as those which beset it to-day. Domestic slang, scientific slang, pseudo-æsthetic affectations, hideous importations from American newspapers, all bear down with horrible force upon the glorious fabric which the genius of our race has reared. I will say nothing of my own on this pressing theme, but will read to you a passage of weight and authority from the greatest master of mighty and beautiful speech.

"Whoever in a state," said Milton, "knows how wisely to form the manners for men and to rule them at home and in war with excellent institutes, him in the first place, above others, I should esteem worthy of all honour. But next to him the man who strives to establish in maxims and rules the method and habit of speaking and writing received from a good age of the nation, and, as it were, to fortify the same round with a kind of wall, the daring to overleap which let a law only short of that of Romulus be used to prevent.....The one, as I believe, supplies noble courage and intrepid counsels against an enemy invading the territory. The other takes to himself the task of extirpating and defeating, by means of a learned detective police of ears, and a light band of good authors, that barbarism which makes large inroads upon the minds of men, and is a destructive intestine enemy of genius. Nor is it to be considered of small consequence what language, pure or corrupt, a people has, or what is their customary degree of propriety in speaking it.....For let the words of a country be in part unhandsome and offensive in themselves, in part debased by wear and wrongly uttered, and what do they declare, but, by no light indication, that the inhabitants of that country are an indolent, idly-yawning race, with minds already long prepared

for any amount of servility? On the other hand, we have never heard that any empire, any state, did not at least flourish in a middling degree as long as its own liking and care for its language lasted."

The probabilities are that we are now coming to an epoch, as it seems to me, of a quieter style. There have been in our generation three great giants of prose writing. There was, first of all Carlyle, there was Macaulay, and there is Mr. Ruskin. These are all giants, and they have the rights of giants. But I do not believe that a greater misfortune can befall the students who attend classes here, than that they should strive to write like any one of these three illustrious men. I think it is the worst thing that can happen to them: They can never attain to it. It is not everybody who can bend the bow of Ulysses, and most men only do themselves a mischief by trying to bend it. We are now on our way to a quieter style. I am not sorry for it. Truth is quiet. Milton's phrase ever lingers in our minds as one of imperishable beauty—where he regrets that he is drawn by I know not what, from beholding the bright countenance of truth in the quiet and still air of delightful studies. Moderation and judgment are more than the flash and the glitter even of the greatest genius. I hope that your professors of rhetoric will teach you to cultivate that golden art—the steadfast use of a language in which truth can be told; a speech that is strong by natural force, and not merely affective by declamation; an utterance without trick, without affectation, without mannerisms, and without any of that excessive ambition which overleaps itself as much in prose writing as it does in other things.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I will detain you no longer. I hope that I have made it clear that we conceive the end of education on its literary side to be to make a man and not a cyclopædia, to make a citizen and not a book of elegant extracts. Literature does not end with knowledge

of forms, with inventories of books and authors, with finding the key of rhythm, with the varying measure of the stanza, or the changes from the involved and sonorous periods of the seventeenth century down to the *stac-ato* of the nineteenth century, or all the rest of the technicalities of scholarship. Do not think I condemn these. They are all good things to know, but they are not ends in themselves. The intelligent man, says Plato, will prize those studies which result in his soul getting soberness, righteousness, and wisdom, and he will less value the others. Literature is one of the instruments, and one of the most powerful instruments, for forming character, for giving us men and women armed with reason, braced by knowledge, clothed with steadfastness and courage, and inspired by that public spirit and public virtue of which it has been well said that they are the brightest ornaments of the mind of man. Bacon is right, as he generally is, when he bids us read not to contradict and refute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and to consider. Yes, let us read to weigh and to consider. In the times before us that promise or threaten deep political, economical, and social controversy, what we need to do is to induce our people to weigh and consider. We want them to cultivate energy without impatience, activity without restlessness, inflexibility without ill-humour. I am not going to preach to you any artificial stoicism. I am not going to preach to you any indifference to money, or to the pleasures of social intercourse, or to the esteem and goodwill of our neighbours, or to any other of the consolations and the necessities of life. But, after all, the thing that matters most, both for happiness and for duty, is that we should habitually live with wise thoughts and right feelings. Literature helps us more than other studies to this most blessed companionship of wise thoughts and right feelings, and so I have taken this opportunity of earnestly commending it to your interest and care.

XX.

A COLLEGE MAGAZINE.

Robert Louis Stevenson, 1850—1894.

[Stevenson was an English novelist and essayist, who in a brief life produced finer work than many others in a much longer existence. All through his life he was an invalid, and had to live much abroad. The experiences of his own life, his relations with other people, and the scenes of his travels are depicted in his writings with a charm of style which is irresistible. Among his great novels may be mentioned *Kidnapped*, *Prince Otto* and *Treasure Island*, the last being one of the best tales of adventure ever written. His *Virginibus Puerisque* is a collection of essays for young men and women, written in the finest prose produced in the 19th century.]

All through my boyhood and youth I was known and pointed out for the pattern of an idler ; and yet I was always busy on my own private end, which was to learn to write. I kept always two books in my pocket, one to read, one to write in. As I walked, my mind was busy fitting what I saw with appropriate words ; when I sat by the roadside, I would either read, or a pencil and a penny version-book would be in my hand, to note down the features of the scene or commemorate some halting stanzas. Thus I lived with words. And what I thus wrote was for no ulterior use, it was written consciously for practice. It was not so much that I wished to be an author (though I wished that too) as that I had vowed that I would learn to write. That was a proficiency that tempted me ; and I practised to acquire it, as men learn to whittle, in a wager with myself. Description was the principal field of my exercise ; for to any one with senses there is always something worth describing, and town and country are but one continuous subject. But I worked in other ways also ; often accompanied

my walks with dramatic dialogues, in which I played my parts ; and often exercised myself in writing down conversations from memory.

This was all excellent no doubt ; so were the diaries I sometimes tried to keep, but always and very speedily discarded, finding them a school of posturing and melancholy self-deception. And yet this was not the most efficient part of my training. Good though it was, it only taught me (so far as I have learned them at all) the lower and less intellectual elements of the art, the choice of the essential note and the right word : things that to a happier constitution had perhaps come by nature. And regarded as training, it had one grave defect : for it set me no standard of achievement. So that there was perhaps more profit, as there was certainly more effort, in my secret labours at home. Whenever I read a book or a passage that particularly pleased me, in which a thing was said or an effect rendered with propriety, in which there was either some conspicuous force or some happy distinction in the style, I must sit down at once and set myself to ape that quality. I was unsuccessful, and I knew it ; and tried again, and was again unsuccessful, and always unsuccessful ; but at least in these vain bouts I got some practice in rhythm, in harmony, in construction and the co-ordination of parts. I have thus played the sedulous ape to Hazlitt, to Lamb, to Wordsworth, to Sir Thomas Browne, to Defoe, to Hawthorne, to Montaigne, to Baudelaire, and to Obermann. I remember one of these monkey tricks, which was called " The Vanity of Morals " : it was to have had a second part, " The Vanity of Knowledge " ; and as I had neither morality nor scholarship, the names were apt ; but the second part was never attempted, and the first part was written (which is my reason for recalling it, ghostlike, from its ashes) no less than three times : first in the manner of Hazlitt, second in the manner of Ruskin, who had cast on me a passing spell, and

third, in a laborious pasticcio of Sir Thomas Browne. So with my other works: "Cain," an epic, was (save the mark!) an imitation of "Sordello": "Robin Hood," a tale in verse, took an eclectic course among the fields of Keats, Chaucer, and Morris: in *Monmouth*, a tragedy, I reclined on the bosom of Mr. Swinburne; in my innumerable gouty-footed lyrics, I followed many masters; in the first draft of *The King's Pardon*, a tragedy, I was on the trail of no less a man than John Webster; in the second draft of the same piece, with staggering versatility, I had shifted my allegiance to Congreve, and of course conceived my fable in a less serious vein—for it was not Congreve's verse, it was his exquisite prose, that I admired and sought to copy. Even at the age of thirteen I had tried to do justice to the inhabitants of the famous city of Peebles in the style of "The Book of Snobs." So I might go on for ever, through all my abortive novels, and down to my later plays, of which I think more tenderly, for they were not only conceived at first under the bracing influence of old Dumas, but have met with resurrections: one, strangely bettered by another hand, came on the stage itself and was played by bodily actors; the other, originally known as *Semiramis*, a *Tragedy*, I have observed on bookstalls under the *alias* of "Prince Otto." But enough has been said to show by what arts of impersonation and in what purely ventriloquial efforts I first saw my words on paper.

That, like it or not, is the way to learn to write; whether I have profited or not, that is the way. It was so Keats learned, and there was never a finer temperament for literature than Keats's; it was so, we could trace it out, that all men have learned; and that is why a revival of letters is always accompanied or heralded by a cast back to earlier and fresher models. Perhaps I hear some one cry out: "But this is not the way to be original!" It is not; nor is there any way but to be born so. Nor yet, if you

are born original, is there anything in this training that shall clip the wings of your originality. There can be none more original than Montaigne, neither could any be more unlike Cicero; yet no craftsman can fail to see how much the one must have tried in his time to imitate the other. Burns is the very type of a prime force in letters: he was of all men the most imitative. Shakespeare himself, the imperial, proceeds directly from a school. It is only from a school that we can expect to have good writers; it is almost invariably from a school that great writers, these lawless exceptions, issue. Nor is there anything here that should astonish the considerate. Before he can tell what cadences he truly prefers, the student should have tried all that are possible; before he can choose and preserve a fitting key of language he should long have practised the literary scales; and it is only after years of such gymnastic that he can sit down at last, legions of words swarming to his call, dozens of turns of phrase simultaneously bidding for his choice, and himself knowing what he wants to do and (within the narrow limit of a man's ability) able to do it.

And it is the great point of these imitations that there still shines beyond the student's reach his inimitable model. Let him try as he please, he is still sure of failure; and it is a very old and a very true saying that failure is the only highroad to success. I must have had some disposition to learn; for I clear-sightedly condemned my own performances. I liked doing them indeed; but when they were done, I could see they were rubbish. In consequence, I very rarely showed them even to my friends; and such friends as I chose to be my confidants I must have chosen well, for they had the friendliness to be quite plain with me. "Padding," said one. Another wrote: "I cannot understand why you do lyrics so badly." No more could I! Thrice I put myself in the way of a more authoritative rebuff, by sending

a paper to a magazine. These were returned ; and I was not surprised or even pained. If they had not been looked at, as (like all amateurs) I suspected was the case, there was no good in repeating the experiment ; if they had been looked at—well, then I had not yet learned to write, and I must keep on learning and living. Lastly, I had a piece of good fortune which is the occasion of this paper, and by which I was able to see my literature in print, and to measure experimentally how far I stood from the favour of the public.

NOTES

I.—Bacon : Of Studies.

- Page 1. **Privateness**—old form of 'privacy'.
- " 2. **Abeunt studia in mores**—'studies pass into character.'
Stond—hindrance ; defect.
Wit—mind ; intellect.
Reins—kidneys.
School-men—the scholastic philosophers of the middle ages.
Cymini sectores—'hair-splitters.'
Receipt—recipe ; prescription.

II.—Swift : The Art of Conversation.

- " 4. **Seldomer**—We should now say 'more seldom.'
Affect—The word is here used in its old sense of 'being fond of'.
- " 5. **Passages**—incidents.
Withdraw within himself—become silent.
Vouchsafe—condescend.
- " 6. **Will's coffee-house**—the name of a famous club.
The wits—the literary men of the age.
Belles letters—polite literature.

III.—Addison : The Royal Exchange.

- " 8. **The Royal Exchange**—the chief place of business in London.
High-change—the Royal Exchange.
Muscovy—Russia, of which Moscow was formerly the capital.

Page 9. The old philosopher—the reference is to Socrates.

Degree—*sc.*, of latitude and longitude.

The pith of an Indian cane—*viz.*, sugarcane.

Give a flavour to our European bowls—*viz.*, by means of the spices they produce.

Muff—a kind of comforter made of fur.

Tippet—a covering for the neck.

Natural historians—the old name of what is now called 'Science' was 'Natural History.'

„ **10. Pyramids of China**—heaps of crockery.

Morning's draught—tea and coffee.

Sir Andrew—Sir Andrew Freeport, an imaginary personage, was one of the members of the 'Spectator' Club.

„ **11. The Change**—the Royal Exchange.

IV.—Johnson : Journey in a Stage-coach.

„ **13. Surtout**—overcoat.

„ **16. Changealley**—a lane near the Royal Exchange.

Quality—The word is here used in its old sense of 'rank'.

Engrosses—writes out law papers.

Temple—the law-courts.

Event—result.

Real estate—true character.

V.—Goldsmith : The folly of attempting to learn, &c.

Page 17. The philosopher who describes the inconveniences of life, &c.—the reference is to Stoic philosophers.

„ **18. Impiety in lawn**—a priest who is irreligious. 'Lawn' was a kind of cloth of which priest's robes were formerly made.

„ **19. Cincinnatus**—a Roman farmer who in a time of political danger was made Dictator or supreme ruler of the State, and quietly went back to his farm when the danger was over.

Page 19. Man wants but little, &c.—a quotation from Goldsmith's own lines in the *Hermit*—

'Man wants but little here below
Nor wants that little long.'

Spleen—malice.

It has been said—*i.e.*, by Aristotle.

VI.—Cowper : The Candidate for Parliament.

- " 20. Dissolves the parliament—During a dissolution, franks were not available, and so letters could not be sent in the days before the introduction of postage stamps.

Orchard side—the name of Cowper's house at Olney.

- " 21. Puss—the name of Cowper's tame hare.

- " 22. The dispute between the Crown and the Commons—the King and the Tories wanted to have Pitt as Premier, the Whigs favoured Fox and North.

VII.—Lamb : Witches and other Night Fears.

- " 23. Legendary aunt—aunt who believed in old imaginary stories.

Stackhouse—Thomas Stackhouse, an English divine, 1681-1752.

The ark—Noah's ark.

Solomon's temple—Solomon, one of the old Hebrew Kings, built a Jewish temple which was the glory of Jerusalem and one of the most magnificent edifices in the world.

- " 24. The witch raising up Samuel—the Witch of Endor—*vide* 1 Samuel, XXVIII, 7-21.

Tome—volume.

A sceptic in long-coats—an unbeliever, though a mere child.

- " 25. Interdicted—forbidden.

The unwholesome hours—the hours about midnight when evil spirits are supposed to wander.

Headless bear, black man, or ape—a quotation from a verse prefixed to Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*.

Page 26. Gorgons, and Hydras and Chimæras dire—a quotation from *Paradise Lost*, II, 628. All these are kinds of monsters mentioned in Greek mythology.

Transcripts, types—copies.

Archetypes—originals.

Dante—Dante's *Inferno*, in which he describes hell.

Ante-mundane—prior to birth.

Keep a stud—entertain a large number.

„ 27. Westmoreland fells—the mountains of Westmoreland in what is called the “Lake District”.

Helvellyn—one of the three highest peaks in the Lake District.

Quantum—amount, a Latin word.

That idle vein—a hankering after poetry.

VIII.—Hazlitt: On going a Journey.

„ 28. The fields his study, &c.—quoted from Thomson's *Castle of Indolence*.

Wit—sense.

Watering-place—seaside towns like Bath, Brighton, &c.

Carry the metropolis with them—lead the mode of life they used to lead in London.

A friend in my retreat, &c.—quoted from Cowper's *Retirement*.

„ 29. Post-chaise, Tilbury—kinds of carriage.

“Very stuff of the conscience”—quoted from Shakespeare's *Othello*, I, ii-2.

„ 30. Out upon—shame upon.

Cobbett—William Cobbet, 1762—1835.

Sterne—an English novelist, 1713—1768.

„ 31. Stonehenge—on Salisbury Plain is full of historical ruins.

“The mind is its own place”—quoted from Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

Page 31. Bodleian—the library at the University of Oxford.

Blenheim—the site of a famous battle in 1713.

Cicerone—guide.

„ 32. Like oil and wine—*i.e.*, soothing.

The Bourbons—the name of a dynasty of kings that ruled France for many years.

IX.—Irving: Rural life in England.

„ 34. Humours—peculiarities of disposition.

„ 35. Carnival—a season of feasting.

„ 36. Superficies—outward surface.

„ 37. Classic sanctity—holiness such as pervades an old Greek or Roman temple.

„ 39. Chaucer—the father of English poetry, died 1400.

X.—Leigh Hunt: A 'Now' (Hot Day).

„ 42. Aurora—the goddess of the dawn.

Phœbus—the sun.

Hitch—pull.

„ 43. Grasshoppers 'fry'—are burnt in the heat. The quotation is from the following couplet of Dryden's:—

“ The creaking locusts with my voice conspire,
They fried with heat, and I with fierce desire.”

Scattering horror—splashing muddy water.

'Title-bats'—stickle-backs, a kind of small pond fish.

„ 44. Lawn of Cos—lawn is a fine cotton stuff, and Cos is an island in the Grecian archipelago, famous for its lawn.

Spruce-beer—Prussian beer.

Aggravated—furious-looking.

Breath of Tartarus—a blast from hell.

Super-carbonated—covered with an extra coating of as coal-dust.

XI.—De Quincey : Interview with a Malay.

Page 45. **Dilemma**—a puzzling situation.

Lunar ones—languages spoken by the inhabitants of the moon.

Art—magic.

Exorcise—to drive away an evil spirit by means of spells.

„ 46. **Statuesque**—like that of a statue.

Veneered with mahogany—made brown.

Anastasius—Emperor of the East, died 518 A. D.

Adelung—a German linguist, died 1806.

„ 47. **Bolt**—swallow.

Emetic—a drug that causes vomiting.

XII.—Carlyle : The Hero as man of Letters.

„ 48. **Great Soul**—hero.

„ 49. **Copy wrongs**—a word coined by Carlyle on the analogy of 'copyright.'

Squalid garret—a dirty small room in the topmost storey of a house, such as that in which Dr. Johnson used to live.

Odin—one of the gods of the old Scandinavian mythology.

One God inspired—a divine prophet.

Burns—Robert Burns, the great Scottish poet, 1759—1796.

Rousseau—a famous French philosopher, 1712—1778.

Non-descript—a nobody.

Phasis—aspect.

„ 50. **Fichte**—a great German philosopher, 1762—1814.

Erlangen—a town of Bavaria.

„ 51. **He is the light of the world**—a biblical phrase ; Cf. John, viii. 12.

A sacred Pillar of Fire—the Israelites were miraculously led through the wilderness by a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. See *Exodus*, xiii. 21.

- Page 51. Bungler**—a man who does his work badly.
Prosaic provinces—material practical departments of knowledge.
'Hodman'—a labourer who carries mortar up and down a ladder to the mason building up on a scaffolding.

XIII.—Macaulay : Early Life of Clive.

- „ **52. Bred to the law**—educated as a lawyer.
Avocation of a small proprietor—farming.
Lineaments—this word is now usually applied to the features of the face.
- „ **53. One of his uncles**—Mr. Bayley.
Flies out—bursts into a passion.
Writership—the junior civil servants of the old East India Company were called 'writers' and their work was that of clerks in the factories.
The East India College—at Haileybury in Hertfordshire.
- „ **54. Fort St. George**—the official name of Madras.
More especially Manchester—because he had lived near that town with his uncle and aunt.
- „ **55. Wallenstein**—the General of the Imperialist troops in the Thirty Years War between Spain and Holland.
War of Austrian Succession—between Maria Theresa and Frederick.
George the Second—King of England, 1727—1760.
The house of Bourbon—the French King.
- „ **56. On parole**—on giving a word of honour that they would not attempt to escape.
Gigantic schemes—i.e., of a French Empire in India.
- „ **57. Inheritance of the house of Tamerlane**—i.e., Moghal Empire in India.

XIV.—Emerson : Nature as the Vehicle of Thought.

Page 58. Inward creation—the mind.

„ **59.** Radical correspondence—resemblance based on their root.

Figures—figures of speech.

„ **60.** Back-woodsman—a man living in a remote uncleared forest.

Perverted—turned away from their proper use.

Rotten diction—decayed language.

Ground-line—low level.

Perpetual allegories—an unending series of metaphors

„ **61.** Analogical—figurative sense.

XV.—Helps : Education of a Man of Business.

Page 62. Safely in the most worldly sense—*i.e.*, without failure or loss.

The Statesman—a series of essays by Sir Henry Taylor, published in 1836.

„ **63.** Knowledge is not more girt about with power—
Cf. the proverb ‘knowledge is power.’

A law in the physical world—a law of nature.

„ **64.** Not technical—*i.e.*, of a general nature.

Soften the transition, etc.—make the change from student life to the life of business less abrupt and painful.

„ **65.** Remote from real life—of an abstract nature.

Uninspired man—a man who was not a prophet.

Full man—ready man—quoted from Bacon’s essay on Studies.

„ **66.** In literature, you are seldom brought to account...
...people—a literary author can afford to be obscure with impunity.

Builds with his materials—is a true architect.

Page 67. With large extent of view—with much foresight.

'Translated into action'—brought into practical use.

XVI—Froude : Reciprocal Duties of State and Subject.

Page 68. Two great sections—these are called the Tories and the Whigs, or the Conservatives and the Liberals.

„ 69. Drag upon the Wheel—a check to progress.

The first Reform Bill—passed in 1832.

In a straitwaistcoat.....ankles—in a most difficult situation attended with grave risks.

Moses—the first lawgiver of the Jews.

Lycurgus—the first lawgiver of the Greeks.

Pot-house-keepers—wine-sellers.

Scandalized—shocked.

„ 70. Rigging—fraudulent management.

Wire-pulling—intriguing.

Keeping down the labour market—maintaining low rates of wages.

Mr. Gladstone—Prime Minister of England four times, the last from 1892 to 1895.

„ 71. Lord Derby—his last term of office was from 1866 to 1868.

Their own peculiar province—*viz.*, of not favouring reform and change.

„ 72. Blood the noses of their hounds—provide their supporters with jobs of some kind to silence their clamour.

Stephenson—the inventor of the steam-engine.

Faraday—a famous scientist who discovered the magneto-electric currents.

Laissez-faire philosophy—the policy of letting things alone.

Spasm of severe national trial—a great crisis.

„ 73. Complement—something without which the other is imperfect.

XVII.—Ruskin : The Sky.

Page 74. Answered—served.

" 75. Too bright, nor good, etc.—quoted from Wordsworth's *The Perfect Woman*.

But as it has to do with our animal sensations—except so far as it appeals to our bodily organs.

The covering vault—the sky.

" 76. Gross—palpable.

God is not in the earthquake nor in the fire—an earthquake and a bright fire accompanied the giving of the Law to Moses on Mount Sinai : see *Exodus*, xix, 18.

The still small voice—another biblical phrase, meaning the ' voice of conscience.'

Leagues of massy undulation—heaving masses stretching for miles.

" 77. Athwart—across.

Rags of vapour—Notice the vividness of the phrase.

XVIII.—Avebury : The Happiness of Duty.

" 79. Stern taskmistress—the reference is to Wordsworth's *Ode to Duty*—

' Stern Lawgiver ! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace.'

Life—activity.

Made shipwreck—sustained ruin.

Antony—one of the Roman rulers who ruined himself for the love of Cleopatra, the fascinating Queen of Egypt.

Brutus—who joined in the assassination of Julius Cæsar for the glory of being known as a patriot.

Cæsar—who aspired to become King of Rome.

N. B.—The quotation is from Colton's *Lacon or Many Things in Few Words*.

" 80. Marcus Aurelius—a Roman Emperor who became a philosopher and is renowned for his *Meditations* ; died 180 A.D.

Page 80. Bacon truly points out—See his essay on Death.

Mates—overcomes.

"Peace on earth and goodwill amongst men"—

this was the prophecy uttered at the birth of Christ.

Epictetus—a slave who was a great Stoic philosopher of the first century. The quotation that follows is from the writings of Epictetus.

Hercules—a mythical Greek hero, famous for his extraordinary strength and labours.

Theseus—another Greek hero.

Attica—the old Greek State of which Athens was the chief city.

" 81. "Black incarnation of freedom"—a black insect representing the perfection of liberty.

There is bitterness at the bottom of the cup—the after-effects are painful.

Dual—two-sided.

" 82. Sir T. Browne—an English physician, author of *Religio Medici* and *Hydrotaphia*; died 1682.

Pyrrhus—King of Epirus, in Sicily.

Sir Arthur Helps—author of the famous *Essays written in the intervals of Business*; see introduction to Section XV.

By a winding stair—by a gradual but circuitous way.

Plato—a famous Greek philosopher, author of the *Republic*, which describes an imaginary perfect commonwealth; died 347 B. C.

Ulysses—a hero of the Trojan War.

" 83. Solomon—See notes, p. 3.

Myself engaged in business—Lord Avebury was a great banker.

Aristotle—a famous Greek philosopher, died 322 B. C.

Page 84. Seneca—a famous Stoic philosopher of ancient Rome, died 65 A.D.

Newman—an English Cardinal and author; 1801—1890.

„ 85. *Æsop*—author of the famous *Fables*.

Cyclopean times—the old days when there were believed to be giants. This belief was supported by the fact that the walls of ancient Greek buildings were of enormous thickness and height.

“If you wish not to be of an angry temper, &c.”—the passage is quoted from Epictetus.

“He who is virtuous is wise, &c.”—quoted from King Alfred’s *Boethi us*.

XIX.—Lord Morley : The Study of Literature.

„ 87. Emerson—See Introduction XIV.

Stopford Brooke—an English divine and critic, author of a history of English literature.

A great French writer—Sainte Beuve, died 1869.

„ 88. Humorists—witty writers—like Mark Twain, Thackeray, Sydney Smith, etc.

Goethe—a great German poet, philosopher and critic; died 1832.

„ 89. By the chance of life—*i.e.*, as an Editor.

„ 90. Unpublished work—*viz.*, manuscripts of rejected articles.

Ninth Symphony—the finest piece of music, composed by Beethoven.

Transfiguration—one of the finest paintings in the world, by Raphael.

The Lakes—the Lake districts of Cumberland and Westmoreland, where Wordsworth composed most of his poetry.

The Isle of Wight—where Tennyson built a house and spent the latter part of his life.

Page 90. Literary deportment—formal composition.

- „ 91. Domestic slang—*e.g.*, 'Wipe' for a handkerchief ; 'governor' for 'father' ; 'kid' for a child.

Scientific slang—Technical terms of science, like 'conduction.'

Pseudo-aesthetic affectations—affected language showing a false love of beauty by avoidance of common phrases ; *e.g.*, the word 'Philistines' often used to denote men who have no true culture or men of the world.

Hideous importations—ugly words that have found their way into English speech.

The greatest master of mighty and beautiful speech—*viz.*, Milton.

A law only short of that of Romulus—a law imposing a penalty just a little less severe than the death penalty. Romulus was the founder of Rome and the brother of Remus, who was killed by Romulus on account of trespassing into his walled territory.

Idly yawning—inactive.

- „ 92. The rights of giants—the right to do as they like, to write in a style peculiar to themselves.

Students who attend classes here—the working classes attending University Extension lectures.

Bend the bow of Ulysses—Ulysses is the hero of Homer's *Odyssey*, and was known as the wisest of the Greeks. He had a mighty bow which he alone could bend.

Overleaps itself—defeats its own end. An echo of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*.

Cyclopædia—a book of universal information.

- „ 93. Periods—periodic sentences.

Staccato—a series of short sentences, abrupt and detached.

Page 93. Bacon is right—the quotation is from his essay on Studies.

Stoicism—subjugation of the passions ; asceticism.

XX.—Stevenson : A College Magazine.

„ **94.** Version-book—note-book or exercise book.

Whittle—cut a chip of wood by continual scraping.

„ **95.** School of posturing—something which taught me to assume false attitudes.

Played the sedulous ape to—deliberately imitated.

Defoe—Author of *Robinson Crusoe* ; died 1731.

Hawthorne—Author of *Tanglewood Tales*, &c. ; died 1864.

Montaigne—a French writer and essayist ; died 1592.

Baudelarie—a French critic and poet ; died 1867.

Obermann—a French author who wrote under that nom-de-plume ; died 1846.

„ **96.** Pasticcio—patch-work.

Save the mark !—an exclamation used to introduce something needing an apology.

Sordello—a long poem by Browning (1840).

Eclectic—made up of features borrowed from many sources.

Keats—an English poet ; died 1821.

Morris—William Morris, an English poet ; died 1896.

Swinburne—an English poet, contemporary of Stevenson ; died only a few years ago.

Gouty-footed—halting.

John Webster—one of the Elizabethan dramatists.

Congreve—the chief dramatist of the Restoration period ; died 1729.

Peebles—a town of Scotland, south of Edinburgh, at one time a royal residence.

The Book of Snobs—a social satire by Thackeray.

Page 96. Dumas—a famous French novelist, author of the exciting novel *The Three Musketeers* ; died 1870.

Alias—a second name ; *urf.*

Ventriloquial efforts—attempts to speak in the style of another.

97. Cicero—a famous Roman lawyer and orator ; died 46 B. C.

Prime force—original writer.

Proceeds directly from a school—is sprung from a group of contemporary dramatists animated by a common spirit.

A fitting key of language—a suitable style. 'Key' is here a musical term.

Padding—mere words without thought.